

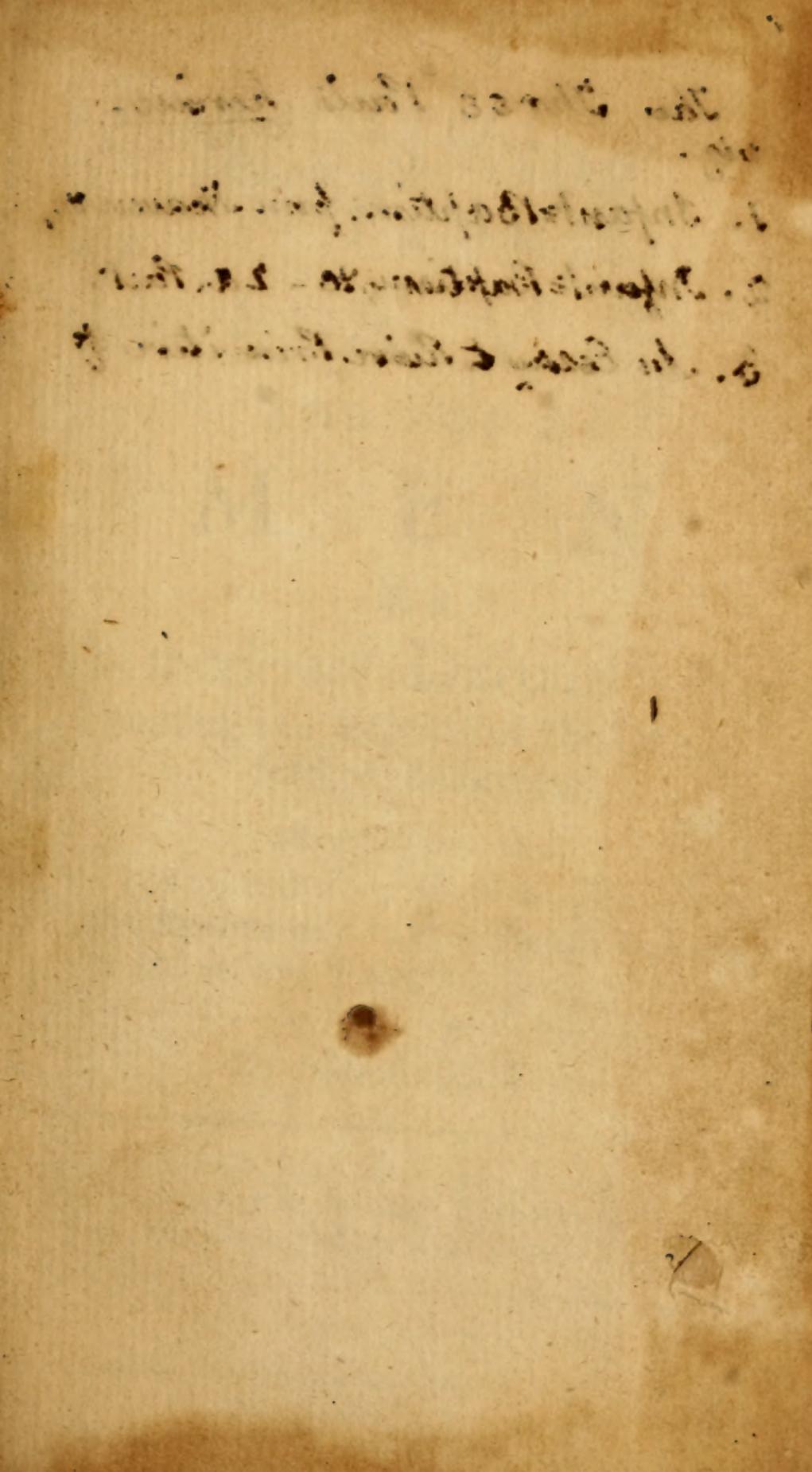
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*Journal* of the Theological Seminary,  
PRINCETON, N. J.

PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

BAP Agnew Coll. on Baptism, No. 115766  
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The Three Parts herein-  
viz.

1. Infant-Baptism from Heaven &c.
2. Infant-Baptism, &c - 2d. Part.
3. An Essay to Revert Primitive & -

Infant-baptism  
FROM  
HEAVEN,  
AND NOT OF  
M E N.

OR,  
A moderate Discourse con-  
cerning the Baptism of the Infant-  
seed of Believers.

Whereunto is prefixed,  
A large introductory Preface, preparing  
the Readers way to a more profitable perusal  
of the ensuing Treatise..

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By Joseph Whiston.

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Ἐγὼ μὴ οὐδεποτε γίγνωσκομέας, ἐρχόμεας δὲ ὁ ἴχθυς τερπός μου,  
ἡ ἀκεῖρη ἵκανη λύσις τὸν ἴμαντα τὴν παραδοχαῖς ποιῶν αὐτοὺς  
υμάς βαπτίζει εἰς πνεῦμαν ἄγιον καὶ πυρί, Luk.3.16.

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LONDON,  
Printed for Henry Millon at the Bible in  
Fleet-street. 1670.

И ПІДСІДЛІ

І:

ДР

И ПУДІН

то таїсна

И ПІДМ

то звісно що відома

THE  
P R E F A C E  
TO THE  
R E A D E R

*Christian Reader,*

**I**T is an old and true saying, *Veritas non querit Angulos*, Truth is neither afraid nor ashamed to be seen, though thereby she be exposed to the severest and most critical tryals and examinations of men, neither is she at all desirous to appear in such a dres, as that thereby she may insinuate her self into the affections of men for this end, that through their interest in , and byassing influence upon the understanding, it may be bribed to a partiality on her side ; her evidence and power is such, as makes that needless, *Magna est & prevalebit*: In the ensuing Treatise thou hast a Doctrine and practice maintained , which I doubt not , will be owned by our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of his appearing , to be part of that Faith once delivered to the Saints , for

## The Preface.

which it is his will they should earnestly contend ; which Doctrine and practice , as I have endeavoured to present to thy view, in the sole light of Divine evidence , rationally deduced from that great Luminary of the Scriptures, without immixing any thing of humane Eloquence ; for the bribing the understanding by subtle insinuations upon thy affections , ( a course , which as my natural Genius leads me not unto, so my indigency, as to abilities, prohibits my attempting of ) so the forestalling thy Judgment, by any subtle artifices of one kind or another, is none of my design in the present Preface. There are only three things , I conceive necessary to be done , to prepare the Readers way to a more profitable perusal of the Discourse here tendered to him.

First, That I should indeavour to remove, at least allay, that prejudice that may possibly arise in the minds of some against it , as coming abroad at such a time as this is , whereby they might be kept from that due perusal and through examination and weighing of what is here tendered to them, as is necessary, in order to their reaping that benefit designed to them by it ; and thus, though there are several prejudices may possibly arise in the minds of men , according to their previous persuasions, relating to the practice here pleaded for, yet I shall only take notice of that , which may arise from the seeming unseasonableness , of sending forth a Discourse of this nature at such a time as this

## *The Preface.*

is, and as affairs now stand with the parties, between whom this controversie hath of late years been more especially agitated, possibly thou mayst think the Author rather deserves a Censure of, at least, indiscretion, than the Discourse it self a serious perusal and examination.

And it cannot be denied, but that an undertaking of this nature, at such a time, doth carry, and that in several respects, a very great shew of unseasonableness in it, and had not the sense and apprehension of the present state of affairs detained me under an irresolution as to its publication, this Discourse might have seen the light much sooner than now it doth; and yet had I not had the approbation of those, whose Judgments I had reason to attend unto, it had not now, no nor ever, for ought I know, appeared in so publick a way as now it doth: But seeing it is thus come abroad, let me in brief give the Reader an account of the ground of my proceedings herein: Yet I conceive it unnecessary, to trouble the Reader with an account of the several occasions, through which my thoughts came at first so to be engag'd, and after to be carried on in a more thorough search into this Controversie; I shall only give him an account of the ground of my sending abroad this Discourse (wherein he will find the result of that search I have made) at this time. And in general take it thus:

Upon further and more serious advisements with my self, and consultations with others,

## The Preface

I could not conceive, how the sending of it abroad, though at such a time, should be justly accounted so unseasonable, as upon the first view it may, and for a while to me it did seem to be. When the practice here pleaded for, by the unanimous consent of all parties, lies from among the Fundamentals of Christian Religion, and consequently, supposing the worst, it should at last be found to be unscriptural; the contrary whereunto I am most confident of ( whether groundless or no, let the intelligent and impartial Reader judge) yet the conscientious embracement of it cannot be destructive to the Souls of men, when nothing is brought to light, beyond what was of publick and general cognizance before, when the judgment and practice of the contrary minded is no way concerned in the sufferings they are subject or liable to, and consequently, the detection of their error cannot be rationally supposed to further their sufferings, when no new Controversie is started, and consequently, no new rents or divisions like to be made, beyond what have been of so long continuance; how the appearing in publick of such a Discourse upon this Subject should at this time, or any other time, be accounted much unseasonable, I could give no rational account, either to my self or to others: As for the manner of handling it, I am not conscious to my self of having given any just cause of offence unto any; what thou wilt meet with here, is argumentative, not invective, aiming at thy information and confirmation, in what I verily judge

## *The Preface.*

judge to be the Truth , not thy prejudice either in temporals or spirituals : In a word , unless the naked proposal of my own perswasion , relating to the Controversie here debated , with the Scripture evidence , captivating my understanding into that perswasion , can be grievous or offensive unto any , I cannot conceive how the ensuing Discourse can be .

But it may be it may be said , There is yet a double inconvenience , or a twofold ill consequence may arise from the publication of a Discourse of this nature at such a time .

First , The minds of Christians will be in danger to be diverted from what is more properly their work , and about which they ought more especially to be taken up .

To that I answer , I wish the ensuing Papers may find the minds of Christians so well imployed , as that such a diversion would be indeed prejudicial to them ; but be it so , as in respect of some , I hope , it may be , yet the exercise of a little prudence will prevent that inconvenience ; and let me here caution the Reader to take heed , that he do not by this , or any other Controversie , divert his mind from the more weighty concerments of his Soul ; take heed thou do not so apply thy mind to , nor suffer thy thoughts to be taken up with any matters of controversie , as to neglect thy growth in Grace , and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ , but , I say , a little Christian prudence will direct in this , and obviate the inconvenience suggested ,

But

## The Preface.

But secondly, It will be said, The appearing thus in publick may occasion the revival of these Controversies, which seem now almost laid aside and forgotten among the People of God, and consequently may renew, heighten and increase those divisions, which heretofore have been of such sad consequence, as to their unanimous and concordant practice of the main things of Religion.

To this I shall answer, I am not altogether without hope of the quite contrary, *viz.* That it may be of some use for the obtaining and promoting union among them,

There is a double union that the People of God are to labour after.

First, An union of judgment and practice, that they may think, speak, and do the same things.

Secondly, An union in heart and affection, that wherein they do differ in judgment and practice, they may bear with, and forbear one another in love.

Now what means can have a more direct tendency, or be more effectual ( will the Lord please to concur with his blessing ) for the obtaining and promoting either of these kinds of union, than the holding forth with a Spirit of meekness what light is received from the Scriptures, abut the things, wherein the difference and disagreement is ?

As for the former , 'tis utterly impossible ever to be attained among those, who dare not, as we use to say , pin their faith upon other mens sleeves,

sleeves, or practice hand over head, whatever is proposed to them, by any means exclusive of this; and with what confidence soever any attempts may be made to effect this union any other way, they will be found utterly unavailable, and probably issue in the quite contrary event to what is aimed at.

But suppose this first and most excellent kind of union, which we ought ultimately to aim at and endeavour, should not be attained, the same differences in judgment and practice should yet remain, yet methinks I may, yea, I cannot but rationally expect, that the latter, *viz.* of heart and affection, will be so far from being impeded and obstructed, that it will be considerably advanced and promoted, though dissenters may not come over to my judgment and practise by what is here offered, yet sure I may promise my self, without incurring the censure of being over confident of the Truth asserted, or the strength and validity of the Arguments produced for its confirmation, that it will be granted, that in case I do err, it is *cum ratione*, and that I have so much ground from Scripture to bottom my judgment and practice upon, as may acquit me, in the judgment of Charity, without stretching it beyond the bounds allowed in Scripture and warranted by Reason, from a wilful persisting in error; and I hardly know any thing more effectual for the maintaining love and friendship among dissenting Christians, than for them to be mutually satisfied in each other, that they do not dissent upon any other account than their respective

## The Preface.

respective conscientiousness of their duty towards God , which satisfaction can hardly be given in a more effectual manner, than by holding forth and declaring each to other the light they have received from the Scriptures of truth, captivating their judgments to the imbrace-ment and practice of what they do differently imbrace and practice ; so that I cannot but hope the sending abroad the ensuing Discourse , will be so far from reviving a Controversie, almost laid asleep and forgotten , to the disuniting of Christians, and heightening their differences and divisions , that it may be of some good use for the promoting the quite contrary end, viz, their uniting , if not in judgment, that they may be as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 1. 10. *καὶ μεταποιήσονται ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῇ, καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ γνώμῃ;* Perfectly joyned together in one mind and judgment ; yet they may live together , *ἀπέχομενοι διάνοιας ἐν σώμασιν,* Ephes. 4. 2. Forbearing one another in love : And yet further let me add one thing more , which having its due consideration , may, if not wholly remove, yet much allay what prejudices of this nature may arise in the minds of men , and it is this ; Times of afflictions , whether coming immediately from the hand of God , or mediately from the hand of man , are special times for every one to take a more through and impartial review of their respective wayes and pra-ctises, the Rod hath a voice which all are com-manded to here ; *Hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it,* Micah 6 9. What its voice is, or what it calls for at our hands, may be gathered partly

## The Freface.

partly from what the God of Wisdom , or the only wise God declares to be his expectation, from those either over whom it is lift up in the threatening, or upon whom it is laid in the execution, and partly from what the men of wisdom, as the Prophet there speaks , have done in answer to this voice, what are Gods expectations he tells us, *Jer. 8. 6.* *I saith the Lord hearkened and heard, but no man spake aright;* and wherein they failed in speaking aright he tells us, *no man said, what have I done,* or which is of the same importance , *what have I not done,* *what have I omitted and neglected that I ought to have done;* the Rod calls to us to call our selves to an impartial account , wherein we have either come short of, or exceeded that Rule we ought to walk by , *what men of wisdom have done in answer to this voice of the Rod,* see in that *Lam. 3. 40.* *Let us search our wayes and turn unto the Lord;* when God is searching after our sins, especially when the search is made by afflictions, when God hath us upon the rack, as *Job* seems to allude, *Job 10. 6.* sure it is our concernment to make a through and impartial search too: God threatens to search *Jerusalem with Candles,* *Zeph. 1. 12..* it is meant of his searching by afflictions: now God seems to have his Candle in his hand , he is searching *England with Candles,* he is in special searching the professing party in *England with Candles;* now it is an excellent observation of that worthy Expositor upon *Job*, saith he, *Troubles are as se many Candles that God setteth up to search*

## The Preface.

us by, and they will be as so many fires inkindled to consume us with, in case we search not our selves; but yet let me say, it is not the bare light of afflictions, without the concurring light of the Word and Spirit, that can discover to any their sin; hence when God holds out the light of his Candle, it must needs be a very seasonable time to hold forth the light of the Word, which being attended with the internal illumination of the Spirit, may discover that to be a sin, which would not be owned so to be at another time; from what hath been said, I cannot but hope, that what is here presented to publick view, will by considerate persons be so far from being accounted unseasonable, that it will be accounted in some sort the more especially seasonable at such a time as this. But suppose, notwithstanding what hath been said, the sending abroad of these Papers at this time, should by any be judged unseasonable, I have three things yet further to offer for my vindication.

First, I considered, that for the Mind to hang in suspence, and lye under the pressure of fluctuating uncertainties about the mind and will of Christ, relating to the discharge of duty, is at any time grievous, but more especially when the hand of God is lift up, and that I know is the case of some truly conscientious Christians, in reference to the practice here pleaded for, and I judged it my duty to yield unto them what relief my mean ability would teach unto:

Secondly,

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Secondly, I considered that saying of the Wise man, *He that observeth the Wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the Clouds shall not reap*, Eccles. 11. 4. And whether I might live to see a more seasonable time was altogether uncertain unto me; and for me to observe the Wind, and stand gazing on the Clouds, till overtaken by the hight of death, where no man can work, and laid to sleep in the dust, and thereby have lost my season for the sowing the Seed, that Seed, of which I may and must say it is, *Meshec* as that word, *Psal. 126. 6.* is rendered by *Junius* and some others, it is, *Semini acquisitum, Semen aliunde comparatum*, Seed that I have through Grace obtained from another's store, I hope I may truly say from his, who, as the Apostle saith, *Ministers seed to the sower, and bread to the eater*; and that to use the Author aforementioned his words, *Prece & pretio*, yet not so much of Silver and Gold, as of that, which by the Testimony of the Holy Ghost himself is the issue of much study, viz. weariness, and I may add, wearing away of the flesh; I was saying, should I have observed the Winds, and stood gazing on the Clouds, till lost my season to sow this same Seed contained in the ensuing Treatise, I could not have expected to reap when the Harvest comes, what now through Grace I can in some measure live in the comfortable expectations of, seasons lost, though something unseasonable prove a loss to the Husbandman when the harvest comes.

Thirdly,

## The Preface.

Thirdly, The sending forth these Papers was necessary to prepare a way to, and lay a foundation for a few practical sheets, which, if the Lord vouchsafe life and opportunity ; may follow, wherein I intend, as the Lord shall assist, to make a more full enquiry into these four things.

First, What are the Reasons of Gods appointing the application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant seed of his people.

Secondly, What are the benefits and advantages arising to them thereby,

Thirdly, What is the duty of Parents towards their Children, as incorporated by Baptism into the Mystical Body of Christ, as visible.

And fourthly, What is the improvement that Children themselves may and ought to make of their Baptism, applyed unto them in their infancy , as they grow up to years of maturity which things I could not fitly speak unto before their Covenant-interest and right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant arising therefrom was proved ; so that the appearing thus in publick ,in the defence of the practice of Infant baptism, was in some sort necessary unto me.

Secondly, Another thing I conceive necessary for the preparing the Readers way to a more profitable perusal of the ensuing Treatise, is, to make some enquiries , what may have had, and still hath too great an interest in the so far prevailing

## The Prefacee.

vailing of the judgment and practice of lying opposite to that here pleaded for ; 'tis, I confess, something strange to me, whence it should come to pass, that so many, and those, at least many of them, truly conscientious Christians, should at so easie a rate part with, and give up their Childrens privilege, as to interest in the Covenant, and the Token thereof, and so readily take up an opinion and practice divesting them thereof.

Three things have often occurred to my thoughts, as rendring this matter of wonder unto me.

First, The plain evidence, as to my understanding, given in by the Scriptures to that their privilege.

Secondly, The utter silence of the Scriptures, as to any express, yea, or plainly deduced consequential denial of it to them.

Thirdly, That tenderness of affection natural ( and sure Grace destroyes not Nature ) to Parents towards their Children.

Hence notwithstanding what is urged on their parts from the Scripture, yet I cannot but conceive there is either something wholly extramental to the Question it self, or some irregularity in the management of their enquiries, in reference thereunto, that hath had, and still hath a considerable interest, at least, in manyes rejection of the Truth pleaded for, and their imbracing the opinion and practice opposite thereunto.

## *The Preface.*

Now it may not be altogether unprofitable to make some inquiry what that should be , that so the Reader being forewarned may disintangle himself, and have his mind more free to attend to, and impartially weigh what is here tendered to him, and upon a serious enquiry, I conceive, these six things may be assigned, as of the importance mentioned,

First, I cannot but think it must in part be imputed to a want of that tenderness of affection towards Relations, attended with the want of a right apprehension and true sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings, and Covenant-priviledges that Christians ought to labour after; the Apostle mentions it as one of the evils of the last times, That men shall be without natural affection.

Now though this evil prevail not in the hearts of truly gracious Souls to a predominancy , as it may and doth in the hearts of such, who have only a form of Godliness ; yet it is too usually found , that truly gracious Souls are more or less corrupted by the Epidemical evils of the times and places where they live , in infectious times their blood and humors may be vitiated and corrupted, to the producing of some evil symptomes , upon whom yet the infection prevails not , to the breaking out into a Disease, to the taking away of their lives. Thus I cannot but think that this evil , of the want of natural affections, too far prevails in, though it prevails not over truly gracious Souls , to the giving a very great advantage to the so far spreading

## *The Preface.*

spreading of the opinion and practice afore-mentioned ; yet I do not say , neither would I be understood, as though I did suppose that this same evil hath been , or is the cause or occasion of all their rejection of the practice pleaded for, and complying with the opposite opinion and practice, who yet do reject the one and imbrace the other : I do not doubt, but there are many among the contrary minded, who are persons of much tenderness of affection towards their Children , and have in a good measure a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings and Covenant-priviledges ; nor yet would I be understood, as though I did suppose that this evil were only to be found among the persons we now speak of, no, I fear the same evil prevails too far in many of those, who yet imbrace, yea, stand up in the defence of the practice of Infant-baptism, and though it doth not appear the same way , yet other wayes it doth ; Instances evidencing this are too obvious than here to need a recital , the Disease is Epidemical, though appearing in some one way, and in others another way ; but this I say ; I do verily judge , that the so universal prevailing of this same evil, in this latter Age of the World will be found to have been one thing giving rise to, and furthering the success of the opinion & practice here opposed; let but Parents get a due tenderness of affection towards their Children, and a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual priy-  
ledges , and their minds will be much disposed

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to an impartial weighing what is offered on the behalf of this practice of Infant-baptism.

I am aware it will be retorted by my Opposers, That it is a fond, foolish and irregular affection towards Children, that hath bribed our understanding, and byassed us to a perswasion, that the Scripture holds forth some benefit or priviledge to them beyond what indeed it doth, our mistakes arise from the byassing influences that these affections have upon our understandings and judgments.

But to this I shall only say, That it is not altogether unworthy our Observation, that Providence should call forth such to appear in

*Mr. Baxter, Mr. Cooke,*  
when they wrote,  
and my self at pre-  
sent being Batche-  
tors:

defence of this practice, who cannot be rationally supposed to have lain under the byass of any such irregular affections; and as for others, who, it is

true, might more rationally be supposed to lye under the force of such a byass, yet their Writings sufficiently declare, they had judgment as well as affection, and their lives and conversations evidence they had conscience as well as judgment; their Writings shew they had ability to discern truth from error, and their lives shew their affections could not byass them to practise, but according as their judgments by Scripture evidence were convinced: There is then no rational ground for any to suppose, that our embracement of, and appearing for the practise under consideration, hath been, or is from any

## The Preface.

any such irregular workings of affection as is suggested; the danger lyes on the other hand; If then we would understand the mind of Christ, in reference to this practice here contended for, labour to get a due tenderness of affection towards Children, with a right apprehension and due sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual privileges: a due and a regular working of the affections towards any good tendered in the Covenant of Grace, hath a special subserviency to our receiving of light from God through the Scriptures, in and about his will concerning our duty relating to our enjoyment of that good.

Secondly, That which hath contributed not a little to the giving rise to, and furthering the prevailing of the opinion and practice here opposed, hath been and is the confounding some either supposed or real irregularities in or attending the administration of Baptism to Infants, with the practice it self, to mention these two things.

First, The manner of its administration.

Secondly, The Subjects it hath been and frequently is administered unto.

For the first, How oft is it found, that persons of weaker judgments are prevailed with to reject the practice of Infant-baptism it self, by a specious Argument that yet only lyes against the way and manner of its administration among those, who hold and maintain that practice; hence it may be observed, how that way and manner is pitched upon and pleaded

## The Prefase.

against, that to the outward appearance seems, and is supposed by the persons making use of this plea, to have the least countenance from Scripture; and thus the way and manner pitched upon is, that of sprinkling, which way and manner of administration, though disused by many, if not generally by all, that with the greatest strength of Scripture Arguments have asserted the practice it self; yet is urged by the contrary minded, as though the only way and manner of its administration among the *Pedobaptists*; hence are those frequent invectives against Instant-sprinkling scattered up and down in the Writings, and too common in the mouths of our Oppositors; and for the latter, how apt are people, being told and perswaded, that themselves or others, as the Seed of unbelieving Parents, had no right to Baptism, to be induced to believe, that no Infants, let the Parents be what they will, have any better right than themselves or others, born of such Parents, had; and hence perceiving the undueness of their own Baptism in their infancy, are easily brought to believe the undueness of the Baptism of Infants in the general: And it is true, there are some other things (the irregularity of which as I shall not deny, so their refutation comes not within the compass of my present business) appertaining to the administration of Baptism to Infants, as by some it is administred, that give a like advantage to the success of the opinion and practice here opposed.

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But now whether the Infant-seed of believing Parents ought to be baptized, is one Question.

How or after what manner they ought to be baptized is another.

What Parents may be reputed to be Believers, so as that their Infant-seed may upon their account be baptized, is a third.

Now it is the first of these Questions only, that is discussed in the insuing Treatise; neither is it at all necessary, that either of the two latter should be taken notice of, or touched upon, in order to the finding out the mind and will of Christ relating unto this: Errors and irregularities, supposing them to be really so, in or attending the administration of Baptism, ought to be reformed, and not pleaded against the practise it self: All therefore that I shall say to this is, let none confound what ought to be distinctly considered; labour first to find out the mind of Christ, as to the practise it self, as abstractly considered, without consideration had to those various Questions, the determination of which is of no use at all for the right determination of this; and having found out the mind of Christ relating to this first Question, then the consideration of the other will be more proper and seasonable; the right methodizing of things highly conduceth to a right understanding the mind of Christ, respective to our duty, when the confounding or jumbling things together, that are of a distinct consideration, subjects to great mistakes.

## The Preface

Thirdly, That which hath had, and hath a considerable interest in the giving rise to , and furthering the success of the opinion and practise here opposed , is the taking up particular Instances and Examples of persons baptized, in the primitive times, upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance , without regard had to the case and condition of the persons so baptized, antecedent to their Baptism, and consequently without considering the true reason and ground of their Baptisme at that age , and upon such a profession and taking them as a full explication of that Commission of Christ , warranting the application of Baptism, under the new Testament administration , as well negative, shewing who ought not to be baptized, as positive, shewing who ought to be baptized. And hence two things are inferred and concluded.

First, That a solemn profession of Faith and Repentance ought to precede the application of Baptism.

Secondly, That none ought to be baptized but upon the precedency of such a profession.

But now let the cases and conditions of the persons, whose examples are produced, be considered, and let the true reason and ground of their Baptism at such an age, and upon such a profession, be inquired into : and thus we shall find, that the persons we are now speaking of , were either such as were Members of the Jewish Church, as the natural Jews, and Gentile Profelites ,

## *The Preface.*

sites, or else they were such, who were converted from among the Gentiles. As for the case of the Gentiles, the reason and ground of their Baptism at such an age, and upon such a profession, is obvious to all, and when any are still converted from among the Heathens, and brought over to the embracement of Christianity, 'tis readily granted they are to be baptized according to the instances produced; but from thence it cannot with any shew of reason be concluded, that such a profession must universally antecede the application of Baptism; and as for the case of the Jews and Proselytes, who before were Members of the Church, and answerably had no need of any new admission into it, the Church still remaining one and the same, the case and condition of none, since the desolution of the Jewish Ecclesiastical Polity can possibly be imagined to answer thereunto, or correspond therewith, and therefore the Instances produced, either of Jews or Gentile Proselytes being baptized at age, upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, ought not to be made the pattern of Baptism, as administered to or among the Gentiles; neither can any such alteration in the Subjects, receptive of the Sign and Token of the Covenant, be concluded from these Instances as is pretended; the reason of their Baptism, upon their personal profession, was, not because under the new Testament administration such a profession is constantly and universally to antecede the application of Baptism, But the Reason was evidently twofold.

First,

## The Preface.

First, Because now a new Sign and Token of the Covenant was instituted and appointed by Christ, which *Abraham's Seed*, in their Generations, were under an Obligation, by vertue of that first Command, to keep ; and hence , as during the continuance of the first Token, *viz.* Circumcision, they were, as, to be incorporated into the Church , or visible Body of Christ , under an Obligation to receive and bear that ; so upon the institution of a new Token, *viz.* Baptism, they were still, supposing the continuance of their Membership in the Church , obliged to receive and bear that ; and hence , though they were duly admitted into the mystical Body of Christ, by Circumcision applyed to them in their infancy , and had no need of another admission , yet when another Sign or Token was appointed , though by the cessation of Circumcision , their Membership in the Church was not nulled or broken off , yet it was necessary they should receive and bear that other Sign or Token now instituted by Christ, and that, that they might continue their obedience to that first Command, to keep the Covenant.

Secondly, Because the continuance of their Membership did indispensably require as a reformation in their judgments and practises, which was to be begun in Repentance , so they were to believe a new Article of Faith, *viz.* That that individual Person , the Man Christ Jesus, was the Son of God, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the World ; which Repentance and

## The Preface.

and Faith were visibly to be professed , in order to their visible continuance in the Church or mystical Body of Christ ; hence it was , that antecedent to their Baptism , the new Token of the Covenant, they were to make that profession of their Faith and Repentance , from whence it appears , that their Baptism upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance , neither concludes themselves antecedently not to be Members of the same Church , or mystical Body of Christ , that Baptism admits into , nor yet that a visible profession is indispensably necessary , antecedent to the application of Baptism.

Secondly , The other thing inferred from the forementioned Instances and Examples , and which follows upon this , is , That none ought to be baptized, but such as are capable of making such a Profession : but now it will not follow , that because some Instances are left upon record , of persons being baptized at age upon their personal Faith and Repentance . that therefore none may be baptized but upon such a profession ; these Instances shew us what we may and ought to do , when a suitable case occurs , but declare not what we ought to do , when cases are no way parallel , hence though we have no express mention made of the Baptism of Infants , *in totidem verbis* , yet having sufficient discoveries of the mind of Christ as to that matter , the want of such express mention ought to be no let in our way , as to the application of Baptism unto them ; therefore if we would come to the knowledge

## The Preface.

knowledge of the will of Christ, relating to the practice under debate, take heed we do not stumble at this stone, do not take up with the bare Instances and Examples of persons baptized in primitive times, as though the full explication, both negative and positive, of the Commission of Christ, for the administration of Baptism, were to be deduced from them, but take in and improve the whole of what Christ hath left us in his Word, whether in the Old or in the New Testament, for the finding out of his mind and will relating unto this practice: And thus, I hope, Reader, thou wilt find in the insuing Treatise, that he hath given us sufficient discoveries of his mind and will.

Fourthly, That which hath given no little advantage to the opinion and practise here opposed is, the comparing the supposed littleness of good, and smallness of advantage accredwing to the Seed of Believers, by the utmost of what we contend for on their behalf, supposing that were granted to them, with the supposed greatness and variety of inconveniencies, and ill consequences arising from the granting of it unto them.

Hence we may observe, how our Opposers, with all their might, endeavour to diminish the good, pleaded by us to redound to the Seed of Believers, by their interest in the Covenant and Baptism, supposing the one should be granted as their priviledge, and the other applyed unto them; and on the other hand, aggravate and set forth the variety of evils, inconveniencies and

## *The Preface.*

and disadvantages, supposed by them to follow upon the granting unto them such a Covenant-interest and application of Baptism upon the ground thereof.

But now all that I shall say to this is, as for the good benefit and advantage arising to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, from both their Covenant-state and Baptism, as applyed unto them thereupon, 'tis exceeding great, as will, I hope, through Divine assistance, be made to appear, if Providence disappoint not my present purpose: At present let this be considered, as for their Covenant-interest and state, a double benefit ariseth to them thereby.

First, They are, as distributively taken, under a Promise of God being their God, in the sense declared in the insuing Discourse.

Secondly, They are, as collectively taken, as Members of the visible Church, under an indefinite Promise, supposing them grown to years of maturity, of being so taught of God, as savingly to know him.

How far the certainty of their future Salvation, supposing them to dye in their infancy, may be concluded from their interest in these Promises, I shall leave to the judgment of the judicious Reader: This, I doubt not, will be found true at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, when these Secrets shall be made manifest, that vastly the Major part of the Seed of Believers, and that by vertue of these very Promises

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Promises made unto them , will be found the Heirs of that Inheritance prepared for the Saints in light ; mistake me not, I do not say, the major part of the Seed of each particular Believer, but the major part of the Seed of Believers generally taken , or as taken one with another : But however methinks it should not be accounted a small matter , to be brought in any sense, though it be never so little nigher the Promises of Salvation , and into a nigher capacity and probability of injoying the good promised than the rest of mankind are in , and that they must sure be acknowledged to be , by that their Covenant-state and interest in the Promises : And as for Baptism , the good and benefit of that is hinted in the close of the insuing Discourse, and is more fully to be declared, if the Lord will: As for the evils and mischiefs, supposed to follow upon our Doctrine and practice, they are really none at all ; whatever evils may be observed at any time to follow , they are only accidental, and will be found to have some other Original, and not be the natural and necessary fruits and consequences of either the Doctrine or practice of Infant-Baptism.

Fifthly, That which is of a like importance with what hath been hitherto mentioned is peoples placing, at least , too much of their Religion in an external way, mode or form, attended with an easiness and facility to be drawn into this or that way by unsound and groundless motives and inducements ; too many think, that if they are but of such a way they

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are good Christians, and secured as to their eternal states; hence through the subtlety of Satan, and deceit of their own hearts, they overlook and neglect the main things wherein the power of Religion doth indeed consist, and betake themselves to, and fall in with this or that way, as supposing themselves thereby insured for Salvation, and wanting judgment to discern between Truth and Error, fall in with the Judgment and practice under consideration, as led thereunto merely by some unsound and groundless motive and inducement; and though it is true, truly conscientious Christians cannot satisfy themselves in a bare way or form, neither will they be led by any motives or inducements, without any regard at all had to the Word of God; yet even in respect of many of them, especially such who are of weaker Judgments, some unsound and groundless motive and inducement hath no little interest in their imbracing this or that way rather than any other; and thus the motives and inducements leading Professors into a compliance with the way, or judgment and practice, lying opposite to what we have here pleaded for, are exceeding various, all which to enumerate would render me over tedious; all that I shall say therefore is, If we would come to a right understanding of the mind and will of our Lord Christ, place Religion where it ought to be placed, and then setting all such motives and inducements aside, weigh impartially the Scriptures, and Arguments grounded thereupon, readily giving up our

## The Preface.

our judgments and practices to the guidance of the light and evidence of those Scriptures and Arguments.

Sixthly and lastly, The persuasion and practice here opposed, have prevailed so far among Christians, in a great measure, through their preposterous enquiries after the will of Christ, relating to the practice here pleaded for, taken in conjunction with the products of those inquiries in and upon their own minds; and the preposterousness of their inquiries lies more especially in these two things.

First, In their inquiring after the will of Christ as to the Baptism of Infants, before they have sought after, or found out the proper uses and ends of Baptism in the general, and the true notion under which it was instituted and commanded by Christ.

Secondly, In their inquiring after the will of Christ relating to this practice, without any precedent consideration had to his will, relating to the interest of the Infants of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof: by these preposterous inquiries men put themselves under a threefold disadvantage, as to their finding out that will of Christ they are inquiring after.

First, They terminate and limit their inquiries to the Scriptures of the new Testament, as supposing the whole will of Christ, relating unto Baptism, it being a new Testament Ordinance, must needs be contained in them.

Secondly,

## The Prefacee.

Secondly, Which follows hereupon, They search not after, nor attend unto the Tenour of the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, nor attend to the various Scriptures contained in the old Testament, opening and confirming that Tenour of the Covenant, as so established with him.

Thirdly, Which follows from both, They loose the benefit of those several Inferences that may rationally, and according to Scripture warrant, be drawn from interest in the Covenant, for the determining and concluding what is the mind and will of Christ concerning the application of Baptism.

But now would people begin their inquiries where they ought to do, and proceed regularly therein, they would find the mind and will of Christ to appear with much more clearness of evidence on the side of the practice we plead for; would they make their first inquiries after the proper uses and ends of Baptism, and the true notion under which it is instituted, and then proceed in an impartial search after the Tenour of the Covenant, and here again begin where they ought to do, viz. at the first establishment of it with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and so proceed regularly, as the Covenant hath been continued, from one Generation to another, to *Abraham's Seed*, whether Natural or Mystical, still regulating their judgments about the additions, alterations and variations of the Covenant, together with the

## *The Preface.*

Sign and Token thereof, by what the Scriptures declare of Gods proceeding therein from time to time, they would come to a more clear understanding what the will of Christ, relating to the practice under consideration is.

But when people shall look upon Baptism as abstracted from its uses and ends, and the notion under which it is commanded, and then limit and terminate their inquiries after the Subjects it is to be applyed unto, to the Scriptures of the new Testament, overlooking the whole of what God hath declared of his mind and will, touching a right to, and interest in the Covenant, throughout the old Testament, having no regard to the ground, that interest in, and right to the Covenant gives to the Sign and Token of it, 'tis no wonder though they fall under so great mistakes, especially if we consider, in the second place, the usual issue and products of these inquiries, as thus preposterously managed in and upon the minds of men; and that is a strong conceit, that because they find not in so many express words mention made of the Baptism of Infants in the new Testament, therefore undoubtedly it is not according to the mind and will of Christ, that they should be baptized; and people having their minds strongly possessed with this conceit are easily perswaded, that they have no interest in, or right to the Covenant or Promises thereof; whereas would they but, before their minds are possessed with such a prejudicate conceit search after the interest of the Seed of Belivers

## *The Preface.*

in the Covenant throughout the whole Scriptures, I doubt not; but as they would plainly discern that their interest, so they would more easily be perswaded of their right to Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant; therefore if ever we would come to a clear understanding of the mind and will of Christ, relating to the Baptism of Infants, let our inquiries after it be regular.

These things I could willingly have spoken more fully to, but the Book swelling to a bigger bulk than I had hoped it would have done, and having staid something long in the Press, these brief hints shall suffice. And therefore,

Thirdly, That the Reader especially that is less able to pass a Judgment upon an Argument, may reap the full benefit designed him by the insuing Treatise, I shall here give him a brief Summary of what is more largely discoursed herein.

What I have adventured thus publickly to appear in the defence of, as the Reader will see in the main Proposition, laid as a foundation to the insuing Discourse; is, the Affirmative of that so long and so much agitated Question, concerning the Baptism of Infants: and all that I have at present ingaged in the defence of is, the Affirmative of that Question, as it respects the Infant seed of Believers; whether both the Parents, or only one be so, and that as immediately proceeding from their own loins.

## *The Preface.*

The method I have proceeded in, the Reader will findin the second page ; the necessity of proceeding in that method I have already intimated, which I desire the Reader to take notice of, that when he finds himself led into a large discourse for the confirmation of the two former subordinate Propositions there laid down, he may not suppose himself led out of his way, as to the proof of the main Proposition ; those that will find out the mind and will of our Lord Christ, concerning the Baptism of Infants, must first know his will concerning their interest in the Covenant and the Promises thereof. And those that will know the will of Christ concerning the Infant seed of Believers interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, must begin at the first establishment of it with *Abraham*, the common Father of all Believers.

And that I might proceed with more clearness, and with greater advantage to the Reader, I have indeavoured fully to explain, at least so far as my present design did require, that grand Promise of the Covenant, unto which the three subordinate Propositions do refer ; where the Reader will find, that though God in that term *Seed*, did intend *Abraham's* whole Seed, or all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto ; yet according to the letter of that Promise, he had a direct and immediate respect to his natural Seed, yet after a different manner, according to a twofold consideration they fall under.

First,

## The Preface.

First, As his natural Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, As his natural Race and Posterity, immediately descending from him in after Ages.

Hence the Promise is to be considered of, either as a definite Promise made to his Seed, distributively taken, and so it did teach to all his Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins, and as it did respect his natural Seed, only to them, or as an indefinite Promise made to his Seed, collectively taken, and so it did extend to his whole natural Race and Posterity ; my meaning more plainly is this, That this Promise was either so made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as that each of them, as severally and particularly taken, had, as his Seed, an actual interest in it : Thus it was only made to his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, or was so made to his Seed, as though none in particular had meerly, as his natural Seed, an actual interest in it : yet God did thereby signify and declare his will and purpose, to vouchsafe unto them, more generally considered, and that as the Seed of *Abraham*, that privilege of a Covenant-relation with himself ; in definite Promises God speaks to particular persons, in indefinite Promises he speaks to none in particular, only declares his will and purpose concerning such a sort or species of men. to whom he makes good his Promises, according to the good pleasure of his own will, in a compliance with his eternal purposes and decrees.

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Now in my first subordinate Proposition, where I say, that God intended *Abraham's* natural Seed, as the immediate and next Subjects of that Promise, I mean his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, and take the Promise as a definite Promise: This I have proved at large *Chap. 2.* and answered what Objections I could imagine might be made against it *Chap. 3.* whether I must refer the Reader for full satisfaction.

And this first Proposition being clear, the way lies plain to the Second, it being a very rational Supposal, that what Priviledge or Blessing the Father enjoyed, should ( supposing it alike competable to them as to him ) descend to his Seed, as his Heirs; and that believing Gentiles *Abraham's* mystical Seed, have this Promise of the Covenant given to, and settled upon them, and that in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham* himself, as a natural Father of natural Children, only allowing to him, as Father, that preheannence mentioned page 65. is evident.

First, From the very Tenour of the Promise, as at first made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed; it was made to his Seed in their Generations, that is, to them and to their Seed, or their Children, as immediately descending from them, for so the Covenant was established, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with him and his Seed, in their Generations; and in the same extent and latitude the Promises of the Covenant must be interpreted and understood, as the

Covenant

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Covenant was established with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, so the Promises of the Covenant were to him, and to his Seed in their Generations; and answerably I have so exprest my self throughout the ensuing Discourse.

And here let two things be carefully observed.

First, That the Promise is made to *Abraham's* whole Seed, both natural and mystical, in one and the same tenour.

Hence secondly, Look how the Promise was to be understood, as referring to either kinds or species, of his Seed, so it is to be understood, as referring to the other; as it was to be understood, as referring to his natural Seed, so it is to be understood, as referring to his mystical Seed.

Now that it was, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be understood as including Parents and Children, is evident, partly because the Promise, as thus made, as referring to them, will admit of no other sence or meaning, consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises, partly because God by his after dealing with the Jews, declares that to be the sence and meaning of it, and partly because the Prophets so expound it as to be fulfilled in Gospel times,

## The Preface

Now this Promise being so to be understood, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, it must needs be so understood, as referring to his mystical Seed.

Secondly, This second Proposition is further evident from the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament, relating to new Testament times.

Thirdly, From the express letter of new Testament, which affirms positively, that the Blessing, not this or that part of the Blessing, but the Blessing simply and absolutely is come upon believing Gentiles by Christ.

Fourthly, From several passages in the new Testament, which though they do not in express terms hold forth this settlement of this Promise upon believing Gentiles, yet do plainly imply it.

For satisfaction in all which things, I am necessitated to refer the Reader to the Discourse it self, where he will find them largely spoken to.

These two former Propositions being established, the third, as I judge, will be questioned but by few; and it is evident thus, for as *Abraham's* whole Seed are in their Generations, that is, both Parents, and immediate Children, under the Promise, so they are under the Obligation

## The Preface.

of the Command, to keep the Covenant, that is; the Sign or Token of the Covenant; whence its evident, that as the Covenant that *Abraham's* Seed, in their Generations, then were, or after should be received into, had, and was to have a Sign or Token annexed to the administration of it; so that it alwayes was, and is the duty of Parents in Covenant, as to receive and bear that Sign or Token themselves, so to take care that their Infant-seed, as joyn't Heirs with themselves of the same Promises, should receive and bear it; and consequently that believing Gentiles, they being the mystical Seed of *Abraham*, are still under the Obligation of this Command, and ought to be baptized themselves (Baptism being the present Sign and Token of the Covenant, into which they are received) so to see that their Infant-seed be also baptized; and as the Promise and Command are of an equal extent, so interest in this Promise declares the person so interested to have such a relation to the mystical Body of Christ, as is an undoubted ground of implantation and incorporation into that Body, as visible, by Baptism; the Promise is made unto Christ, and only to him, either personally or mystically considered; hence whoever have an interest in this Promise, they must undoubtedly have so far relation to Christ, as will warrant their implantation into him, as mystically considered, by Baptism, that being the only means appointed by Christ, for the implantation of any

## The Preface.

any into his mystical Body : And further, we find the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism, upon interest, either in this or some other equivalent Promise, which he would never have done, had not interest in that Promise been a sufficient ground for the application or reception of Baptism , but I must come to a close.

And thus Reader , though there are some other things I would willingly have spoken to, yet I shall only acquaint thee with two things, and request two or three things of thee, and then dismiss thee, to the serious perusal of what is here tendered to thee.

First , That which I would acquaint thee with is, That whereas there are several Scriptures , usually insisted upon , for the proof of the lawfulness of this practice of Infant-baptism , which thou wilt find in the insuing Treatise, either not at all, or very little touched upon, the reason is , not that I judged them impertinent or insufficient for the proof of that practice; I judge they are full and pertinent, and some of them, especially that *1 Cor. 7: 14.* as managed in special by Mr. Baxter , unanswerable , but know, that I do but glean after others , and therefore have especially insisted, both in the Arguments I have managed , and Objections I have answered , upon such Scriptures as have been more briefly touched upon

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upon by them ; and would desire the Reader, as he hath opportunity, to take what they have said from those Scripture , for his more full confirmation ( supposing any doubts may yet remain in his mind ) in the Truth that I, in common with them , have pleaded for.

Secondly, Another thing ( Reader ) that I would acquaint thee with is this , That whereas 'tis possible thou mayest have met with some Objections which are not here taken notice of ; the reason is , because I judged them no way able to counter-ballance ( in the judgments of any of a competent understanding ) the evidence produced , in confirmation of what I have asserted , or else because they wholly concern others and not my self, in the way I have proceeded in,

That which I would request of thee is ;

First, That thou take the three subordinate Propositions in that order I have laid them down, and fully weigh the first before thou proceed to the second , and then throughly weigh the second before thou proceed to the third; to be satisfied in the truth of the first will conduce not a little to thy entertaining the evidence produced for the confirmation of the second ; and to be well established in these two, will much facillitate thy embracement of the last,

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last, wherein the main Truth contended for is contained.

Secondly, Let me request a favourable construction of what weakness appears in the management of the whole Debate ; thou wilt soon find , that the Discourse here put into thy hand comes abroad in a very mean dress , and not without many incongruities in expression , and too many interruptions in the sence ; I am unwilling to trouble thee with an account how it is come thus to pass , let me only say , it comes to thee, not only through the hands of a Printer and Corrector , but of more than one Transcribers : I have only to request on my own behalf , that thou wilt have so much Charity for me , as to judge , it went out of my hands compleat , as to sence , though not cloathed with such apt and fit expressions as it might have been ; on their behalf I shall request , that thou wilt not lay the blame upon any one of them , they have all their respective shares in it : I hope thou wilt be so ingenious , yea , so wise for thy self , as to look at the strength of the Argument , and not at the defects of the terms .

Thirdly, I have only this further to request of thee, That thou wilt joyn with me in fervent prayers unto God , like unto whom none can teach , that he will lead both thy self and me

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me into all truth , and through the true knowledge and practice thereof, unto that Assembly of the First-born , among whom no contest, of what kind soever, have any place .

*Jan. 20.  
1670.*

*Tbine, in the Service  
of the Gospel,*

*Joseph Whiston.*

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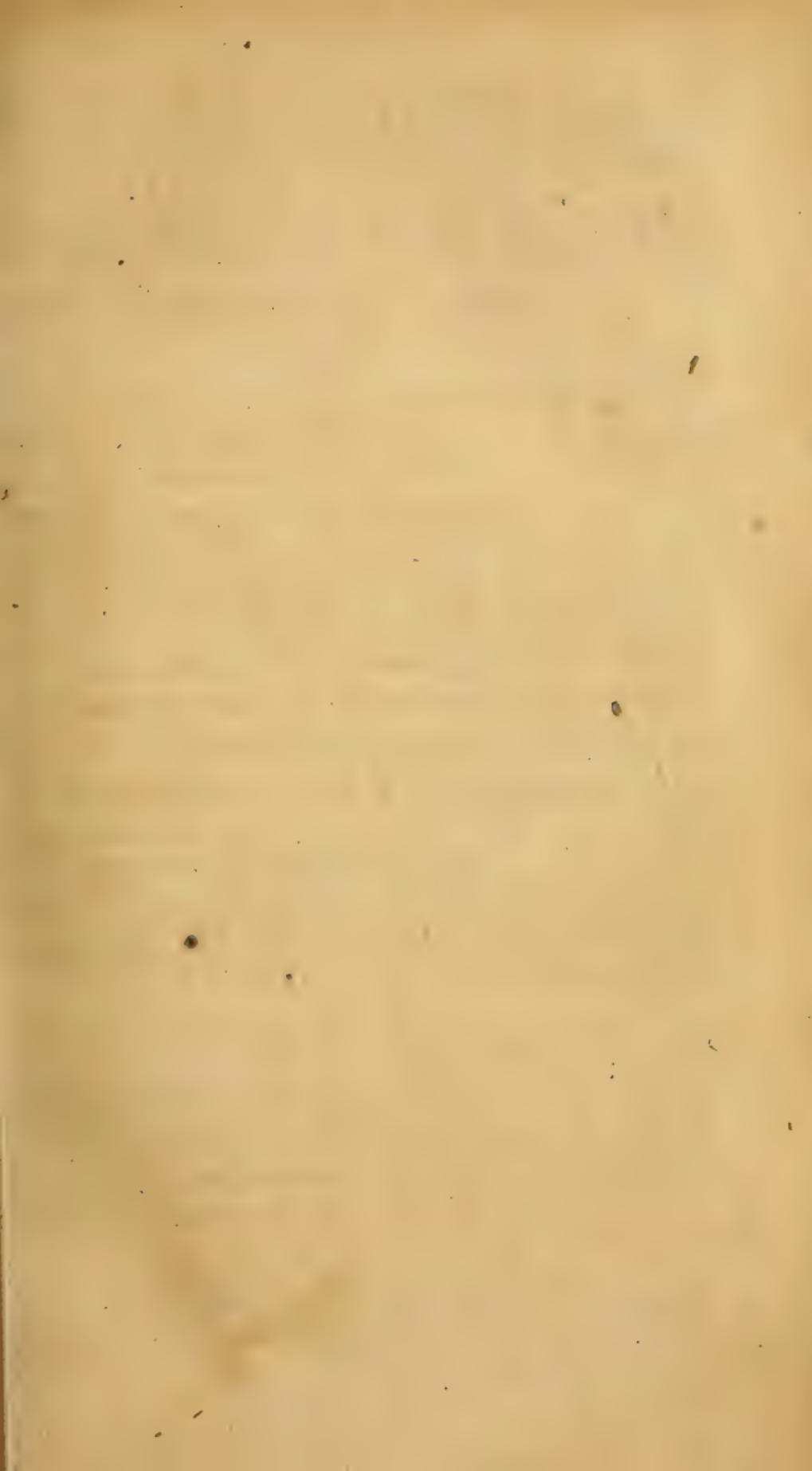
*Reader,*

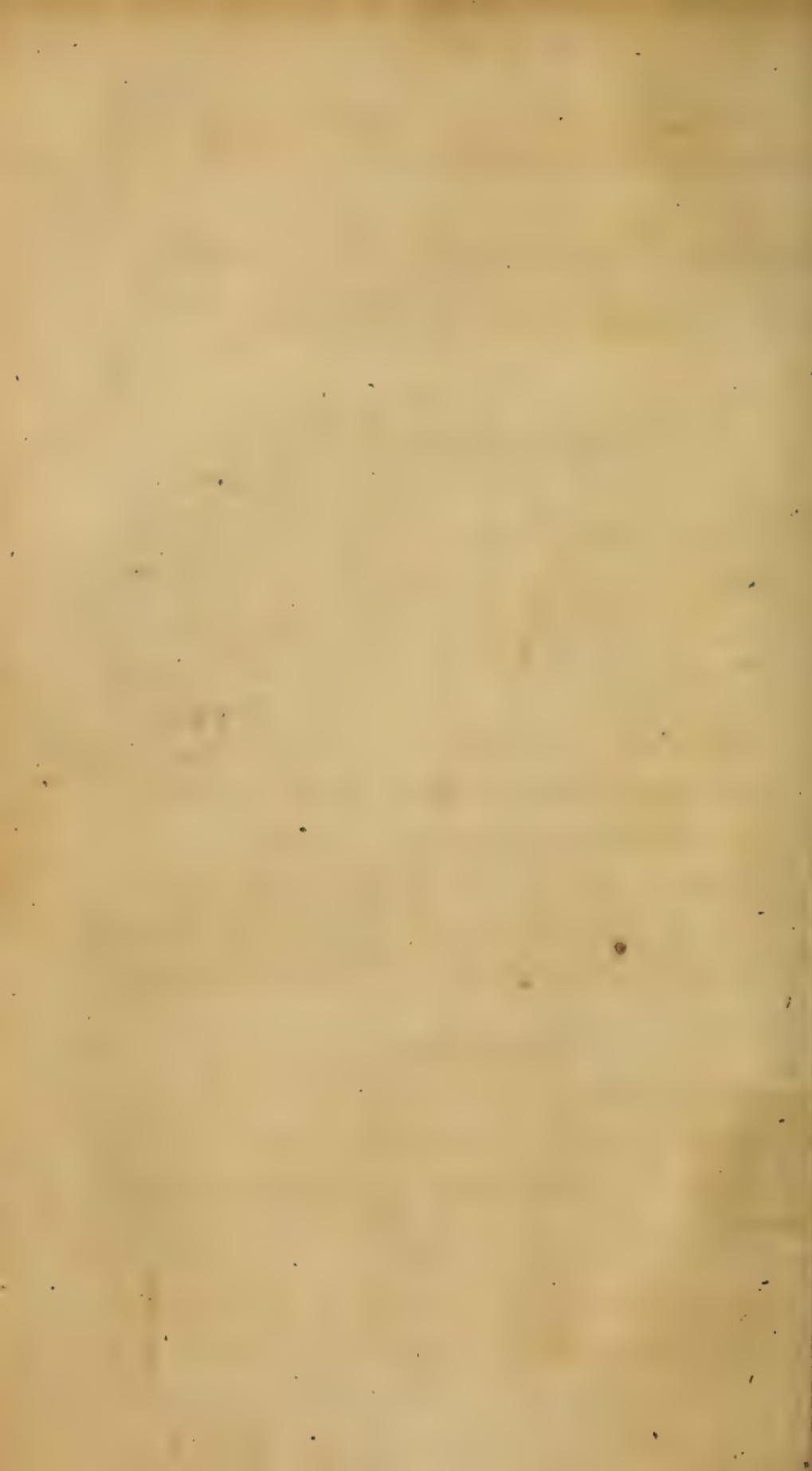
Reader, least thou shouldest either not understand, or misunderstand the Author: sence in these passages, wherein these Escapes have slipt the Press ( which are somewhat more than is usual in so small a Treatise as this is ) thou art desired before thou readest to corre&t them with thy Pen.

In the Preface, page 7. line ii. read incurring.

PAge 13.line 1.blot out, in after ages; p. 18.l. 24 for that r.  
these are: p. 29.l.23.put a full stop after family; p. 42.l.19.r.  
indefinite : p. 44.l.20.before the add all : p. 47.l.2.f. never  
r.now: p. 49.l.12.r.from : p. 52.l.20.f party r.parts: p. 55  
l.20.f. the r. no : p. 57.l.29. blot out verse 12. p. 68.l.18.r.  
inconsistent : p. 76.l.32. f.as r. is : p. 78.l.24. f.wer. he :  
p. 84.l.7. blot out that ; l. 14. r.general : p. 87.l.1. f.Ir. it ;  
p. 93.l.10.r.his : p. 94 ~~wsw~~: 108.l.10.f.father r.faith : l.20.  
r.that ; p. 112.l.1. blot out himself; p. 113.l.14:r.ther houses :  
p. 123.l.28,blot out one : p. 135.l 24.r. concerns ; p. 142.  
blot out part of the second and third line & p. 147.l 12.blot  
out to say that ; p. 149.l 19.blot out all ; p. 153.l.25.r.care-  
fully : p. 179.l.12.r.political : p. 184.l.9.f.was r.as : p. 197  
l.31.f.but r. that : p. 203.l.ult.r.their : p. 212.l.17.r.not : p.  
216,l.28.r.offert: p. 242.l.17 r.when , so p. 245.l.24 p. 246  
l.11.f.generally r.Gentiles ; p. 249.l.9. f.or r.and ; p. 258,  
l. 28. r.contradistinction . p. 272. before only add not ;  
p. 273.f.there r.these ; p. 306 l. 26. r. deduced.

There are, its true, some other mistakes of a less moment, which the Reader will easily perceive and rectifie as he goes along, or if he discern them not he is in no danger to be prejudiced by them ; as sometimes the plural number put for the singular, sometimes the singular for the plural. The Reader s must also take notice of a mistake in the Folio's, the Folio's from 156.to 177. being wanting, where yet nothing is wanting in the Book of what was intended.







# Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men.

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## CHAP. I.

The main Proposition, discussed in the ensuing Treatise, laid down; in order to the confirmation of which, three subordinate Propositions proposed. The grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promised to be a God to Abraham and his Seed in their Generations largely explained. The full mind and meaning of God in that Promise held forth in five Conclusions. The sense in which the first subordinate Proposition is to be understood, declared.

### Proposition.

**H**at it is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized.

For the more full evidencing the truth asserted in this grand Proposition, I shall lay down

B

and

and speak to three subordinate Propositions, which being distinctly and fully proved, the truth of our grand Proposition, will as certainly and infallibly be inferred, and concluded from them, as the salvation of any particular Believer can be inferred and concluded from that universal Proposition ( viz. ) *He that believes shall be saved.*

These subordinate Propositions are,

*First, That when God, at his first entering Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed, as the first and next Subjects of that Promise.*

*Secondly, That this Promise in the sense after to be declar'd, is by God himself settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles.*

*Thirdly, That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promise, ought according to the will of Christ, to be baptized.*

To begin with the first: *Viz.*

*1. That when God at his first entering Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the first and next Subjects of that promise Abraham's natural Seed were intended as the immediate Subjects of that Promise, as made to him with respect to his Seed; The Promise I have reference*

reference unto, is that in Gen. 17. 7. where note, that I do not say that they are the only, nor yet the principal Subjects of that promise, but the immediate and first subjects, the promise in the letter of it did immediately and primarily respect them.

Now that the sense and meaning of this Proposition may more fully appear, and all mistakes about it be obviated and prevented, I shall enquire into three things with reference to that Promise.

First, Who are intended in that term Seed, according to the true and full acceptation of it in that promise.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered as receiving that promise, or having that promise made to him by God.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of that promise, in regard of the extent, and latitude on the one hand, and the limitations on the other.

For the first, We may observe that the Scripture speaks of a twofold seed of *Abraham*.

1. There is his natural Seed.

2. There is his spiritual or mystical Seed.

I shall speak to this term Seed, in the latter notion of it, in the first place, namely, as it intends or signifieth. *Abraham's* spiritual or mystical seed, and thus by seed we are to understand Christ mystical, or whole Christ, as I may so speak, including both

Christ himself as Head, and the whole universal Church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, as the Body: Thus this term Seed is taken, Gal. 3.

¶ 16. When God made promise to Abraham, he saith not, to thy seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, which is Christ; id est, Christ mystical; and thus the Gentile-Proselites under the first Testament, Servants bought with money, or born in the house, were accounted for Abraham's seed; all those that were admitted into fellowship with the people of God in the Covenant, and benefits, blessings and privileges of it, how or by what means soever they came to have their admission, were accounted for Abraham's seed, and had the actual enjoyment of the good of that Covenant (I mean so many as did actually enjoy it) as Abraham's seed, by virtue of this Promise, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed: So believing Gentiles, or any other, who with them have admission into the Covenant, are accounted for Abraham's seed: all that inherit the good promised, inheriting of it, under that notion, as his seed, by virtue of that forementioned Promise; and thus the natural seed of Abraham in another sense were his mystical seed; the whole mystical body of Christ made up, as I have said, both of Jews and Gentiles, is the seed here intended: And this spiritual or mystical seed of Abraham falls under a two-fold consideration.

1. As visible and denominative.
2. As invisible and real.

The Apostle gives us this distribution of *Abram's seed*, Rom. 9. 6. *All are not Israel that are of Israel, &c.* that is, all that are of the mystic body of Christ as visible, are not really and truly of his body mystical as invisible; the visible body of Christ is of a larger extent than his invisible; 'tis all one as if the Apostle had said, some are visible, and denominatively the seed of *Abraham*, who yet are not truly and internally his seed: That this is the meaning of the Apostle, is evident from the following verses; of which place more hereafter. Hence this term *seed* is to be understood sometimes of his seed as visible and denominative, sometime of his seed as invisible and real: in the former sence we are to understand it in the place forementioned, Galat. 3. 16. By Christ we are to understand the mystical body of Christ as visible, as is evident, because 'tis by Baptism that the several members are incorporated into, and united unto the body of Christ, as here spoken of.

Now Baptism doth not properly incorporate into the body of Christ as invisible, but as visible; in the latter sence we are to understand it, Rom. 9. 8. Seed here we are to understand of the elect, and the meaning is, that all they that are the children of the flesh are not elected, and in that respect not the Children of God, nor accounted for the seed.

Some that are the children of the flesh are the children of God, and are accounted for the seed, but all that are the children of the flesh are not the children of God, nor accounted for the seed;

that is in this strict notion and consideration of this term seed , as it signifieth the true internal and invisible seed of *Abraham*.

Children of God and Seed here are , *termini convertibiles*, convertible terms : now as persons are denominated the children of God, either in regard of their visible and external appearing so to be, or in regard of their really and internally being such ; ( saith Christ , 'Tis not meet to take the childrens bread and give it to dogs ) it's meant of the things of the Gospel , primarily appertaining to the Jews , as yet the Covenant-people of God : Now Christ calls them, indefinitely considered, children, that is children of God ; when as it appears by their so general after-rejection , but few of them were really and internally the children of God.

So some are the seed of *Abraham*, and so to be accounted , in regard of their visible and outward appearing so to be, who yet are not really and internally his seed.

Others are not only visibly, and in regard of an external appearance the seed of *Abraham*, but are internally and really so : Of these latter, this term Seed, in this place, is to be understood ; the children of the promise are accounted for the Seed, that is, they, and they only are internally the Seed of *Abraham*, I mean his spiritual and mystical seed , for in that fence this term Seed is here to be taken.

Secondly, There is *Abraham's* natural Seed ; only for preventing mistakes. Note,  
That though I distinguish between *Abraham's* spiritual

spiritual and natural Seed, yet the difference between them is only respective; the same persons might be, and in respect of many were both his natural, and also his spiritual Seed; of which more after: This being noted, I say, there is *Abraham's* natural Seed; and this phrase, *Abraham's* natural Seed, may be taken two ways.

1. As signifying his Children descending immediately from his own loins; as it is said of *Ishmael* he was *Abraham's* seed, Gen. 21.13. *He is thy seed*, saith God to *Abraham*, speaking of *Ishmael*; and the like may be said of all his other children, they were his natural seed.

2. This phrase may be taken as signifying his whole race or posterity, or all those that did meditately descend from him in after ages: thus Gen. 15.18. *Unto thy seed*, saith God, *have I given this land*; it is meant of his race or posterity, or his seed meditately descending from him.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered, as receiving this promise from God.

I answer, That *Abraham* is to be considered both as a natural and also as a spiritual father, or both as a natural Father, and as the Father of the faithful. That God did look on *Abraham* as giving him this promise as the fathet of the faithful, is evident from Rom. 4.11, 12, 13. and some have thought that he was eyed and looked upon only under that notion and in that capacity; but

hat he was not only looked upon as the father of the faithful, but as a natural father, is evident by this Argument.

If *Abraham's* natural seed were intended as the immediate and next subjects of this promise, and that as such, then *Abraham* as receiving this promise, or having this promise made to him with reference unto them, must needs be eyed and looked upon as a natural father; but the former is true, therefore the latter; the consequence in the major proposition, cannot be denied; for if God intended *Abraham's* natural seed as such, that is, as his natural seed, then he must needs eye *Abraham* as a natural father, as making this promise to him: Now that he did intend *Abraham's* natural seed, will, I doubt not, be sufficiently evident by the proof of this first proposition; and that they were intended as his natural seed is evident, because in respect of some of them, they could be looked upon under no other notion, they could not be looked upon as his spiritual seed, for such they were not, whether we respect election or actual faith, take it of *Ishmael*, he was neither elected, nor had actual faith; as for what some think concerning his future repentance 'tis wholly groundless, we having no intimation of it throughout the whole Scripture; but the contrary is intimated, or rather plainly implied in that *Ram. 9.* Now if he (and 'tis like the same was the case of some at least of *Abraham's* Sons by *Keturah*) could not be looked upon as *Abraham's* spiritual seed, he must needs be looked up-

on, under that very notion and consideration, as his natural seed, and as such was intended as one subject of that promise : And whereas some think that the Apostle, Rom. 4. expounds this promise as made to *Abraham* only as the father of the faithful , 'tis a great mistake.

That he was eyed as the father of the faithful is readily granted ; but that he was eyed *only* as such a father is denied, and is not in the least intimated by the Apostle in that place : But not to stay on this, it is sufficiently evident, that as *Abraham* sustained that two-fold relation , *viz.* of a natural and of a spiritual father , so he was eyed under both notions , as receiving this promise , on the behalf or with reference to his seed.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude on the one hand, and the limitation on the other.

Before I answer this Question, let me only premise , that the true determination of this Question conduceth not a little ( if I mistake not ) to the clearing up and determining the truth pleaded for, as the not right understanding the true intent of this promise in the regards mentioned , hath been one considerable cause of so many rejecting the truth we plead for , and their too ready imbracing of the opinion we oppose : Therefore I desire, that what I have to say in answer to the Question, may be diligently attended to.

First then, for the intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude of it, take it in these two particulars.

1. That under this term Seed in this promise, the whole seed of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, are comprehended: hence though I say his natural seed, as afore expressed, were firstly and immediately intended as the first and next subjects of this promise; yet not excluding any other, who according to Scripture account were to be reckoned unto *Abraham* as his seed: As we are not to interpret this term Seed of Christ personally, so as to exclude his mystical body; nor of his mystical body, invisibly and internally considered, so as to exclude any that are of his mystical body, as externally and visibly considered; nor of his mystical body, whether visible or invisible, to the excluding of his natural seed, whether immediate or mediate: So on the other hand, we must not limit it to his immediate seed, to the excluding of his mediate, nor to either, so as to exclude his mystical seed, but we are to understand it in its full latitude and extent, as comprehending and including his whole seed.

That *Abrahams* natural seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were intended, will appear by the proof of this first proposition, and is the only thing there to be proved; that his whole race and posterity as mediately descending from him, were intended shall be granted.

That *Abrahams* spiritual or mystical seed were intended is sufficiently evident, as from the denomination they bear of *Abrahams* seed ; so by their inheriting all the good of the Covenant of Grace, as *Abraham's* seed, by virtue of this very promise, as will more fully appear by the proof of the second proposition ; so that, I say, this term Seed is to be understood in such an extent and latitude, as to take in and comprehend *Abraham's* whole seed ; but this I say , that his natural seed were firstly and immediately intended, as the first and next subjects of that promise.

2. Which I desire with the like care may be attended to : This promise, as made to *Abraham's* whole seed, was made to them in their respective generations, under which phrase, their generations , we must understand Parents , and their Children immediately descending from their own loins : so that the promise runs to *Abraham's* seed in their generations, that is, to all his seed, and to their respective natural seed in conjunction with themselves.

Secondly, We may consider the intent of this promise, in regard of the limitations of it ; and thus this promise had a two-fold limitation.

1. It had a limitation in regard of the persons actually interested in it.
2. In regard of the continuance of that their interest in, and their actual possession and enjoyment

ment of the good of the promise they were before interested in.

I. Then I say , this promise was given to *Abraham* under a limitation , in regard of the persons actually interessed in it ; and thus it was limited to *Abraham's* seed in their respective generations, including, as before, parents and their immediate children ; my meaning is, that this promise taken as a definite promise made to *Abraham* , with reference to his seed distributively taken, that is, as they were severally and each in particular intended in it, so it did reach to and take in only *Abraham's* seed in their respective generations, they and their immediate children.

It's true, as it was an indefinite promise made to *Abraham's* natural seed, collectively or generally taken, so it had respect vnto his whole race and posterity, whether mediately or immediately descending from him ; but I say, take it as a definite promise made to *Abraham's* seed , distributively or particularly taken : so it was made only to each of them respectively in their generations ; that is, to them and their immediate children. To explain my meaning , take for instance any parent that was related to *Abraham* as one of his seed , let *Isaac* be the instance : *Isaac* was one of *Abraham's* seed , and as so related to *Abraham* was under this promise, That God would be a God to him in his generations : Now as in this phrase, his generations, *Isaac* , and his children immediately descending

cending from him ~~in after ages~~, were personally included, or particularly intended in it, it was to *Isaac*, as *Abraham's* seed, in his generations, to him and to his immediate children: As this promise is to be understood in the extent mentioned, as including parents and children; so it is not to be enlarged beyond what was the true intendment of God in it. Now though God made it to each of *Abraham's* seed, whether immediately descending from his own loins, or otherwise standing related to him, as his seed in their generations, yet his intendment was not, that all that should successively, in following ages, descend from them respectively, should be included as joyn*t* subjects with them of this promise, so as to claim, by virtue of their relation unto them, a joyn*t* right and title to the promise with them; his intendment only was, that his seed in their generations, that is, parents, and immediate children, should be accounted as joyn*t* subjects of this promise; and in this regard this promise was one and the same, or ran in one and the same tenour to *Abraham*, and to his seed, only allowing to *Abraham* something of preheminence ( hereafter to be explained ) above any of his seed; but otherwise the promise, for the substance of it, was one and the same, or ran in one and the same tenour to both; for the promise was to *Abraham* and his seed; which promise, as a definite promise made to him, with reference to his natural seed, distributively taken, extended no further than to his natural seed, immediately descending from his own

own loins ; and was not to his whole race and posterity, no not by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, as many seem to have very much mistaken, to the no little obscuring the truth we now plead for : I still grant that the promise, as an indefinite promise, had respect to his whole race and posterity , and that not only by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but *Ishmael* and his Sons by *Keturah* : but yet as a definite promise, as before express, it extended no further than to his own immediate children , even *Jacob* himself had not an actual interest in this promise in his infancy, as he was one of *Abraham's* natural posterity , but as he was included in the promise as made to *Isaac* ( one of *Abraham's* seed ) in his generations ; and in the very same tenour the promise runs to *Abraham's* seed , That as God was a God to *Abraham* and his natural seed, so he would be a God to them and their natural seed, that is, to them in their generations : But that's the first limitation of this promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his seed.

2. This promise was given unto *Abraham* under a limitation, in regard of the continuance of his seeds interest in, and their actual possession and enjoyment of the good promised , that they had afore an interest in ; and thus it was limited both to the seed and their respective generations, as they should become, and continue to be *Abraham's* mystical or spiritual seed, through their personal entring into, and walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their father *Abraham*.

Take *Isaac*, he was one of *Abraham's* natural seed, and as such was intended in this promise, That God would be a God to him in his generations; that is, as before expressed, to him, and to his immediate children; but now the continuance of his interest in, and actual enjoyment of the good of the promise, as grown up to years of maturity, did depend upon, and necessarily require his personal acceptance and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, into which he had, as one of *Abraham's* natural seed, admission in his infancy; hence his childrens actual interest in, and right unto the promise ( which was in part the good of the promise, as made to him ) depended upon his mystical relation to *Abraham*, and not merely upon his natural relation to *Abraham*.

For if so be he had not accepted of, and performed the conditions of the Covenant, his children had wholly lost that their right to and interest in the promise, which was granted unto them with himself, as included in his generations.

And hence it will undeniably follow, that all *Abraham's* natural race and posterity by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, held their interest in, and right to the promise, and enjoyed the good promised, either as *Abraham's* mystical seed, or as included in the generations of those that were his mystical seed, for their bare natural relation to *Abraham* was not enough to preserve their own interest, nor convey a right to and interest in the promise to their children.

And

And from all it will follow , which I desire may be diligently observed , that the case of believing Gentiles , supposing the promise to run in the same extent and latitude to them that it did run in to the natural posterity of *Abraham* ( as I doubt not , through divine assistance , shall be made evident ) that it doth.

And the case of the Jews , or natural posterity of *Abraham* , is one and the same , in regard of their own and their childrens right to , and interest in the promise : the natural posterity of *Abraham* , or the Jews , when once grown up , held their interest in , and right to the promise , not barely as his natural posterity , but as accepting of , and performing the conditions of the Covenant , so far as not absolutely to disannul that their interest in it , and consequently as *Abrahams* mystical seed , and as such they conveyed a right to , and interest in the same Covenant and Promise , themselves were under to their children .

And the same is the case of believing Gentiles , they have a right to , und interest in the promise , as accepting of , and performing the conditions of the Covenant , and as so doing , convey an interest in , and right to the same Covenant and Promise , they themselves are under , to their children , by virtue of this promise as made unto *Abraham* , with reference to his seed in their generations .

The truth of what is now asserted concerning the extent and limitations of this promise , will

I doubt not sufficiently appear when I come to the proof of the second Proposition.

The sum of what hath been hitherto said, take in brief in these five Conclusions.

First, That when God entered Covenant with *Abraham*, and promised to be a God to him and his seed in their generations, he intended, according to the full latitude and extent of that promise, his whole seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, grown persons, or infants, all those who, according to the Scripture account, should bear the denomination of *Abraham's* seed, how, or by what means soever that denomination was applicable unto them, were comprehended under this term Seed.

Secondly, Although the promise extend to, and ought to be interpreted of *Abraham's* whole seed, as now expressed, yet God in it had a peculiar and special regard to his natural seed, whether immediately or mediately descending from him.

Thirdly, That the natural seed, race or posterity of *Abraham* enjoyed an interest in, and right to this promise, and together therewith a Covenant-state and relation God-ward successively, for so long time; not barely as his natural seed, but as his mystical seed; that is, through parents so far performing the conditions of the Covenant, as to preserve their own Covenant state and relation themselves, conveying to their children the same interest in, and right to the Covenant and Promises thereof that themselves had.

Fourthly, That in and among the seed of *Abraham*, as considered these various wayes aforementioned, there is a certain number afore chosen and elected of God, to whom in a peculiar and special manner, this term Seed is applicable, and that in regard of their eternal designation to enjoy the good promised ; the whole number of those , whom visibly and denominatively were to be accounted for *Abraham's* seed , were intended in this promise ; yet the promise was not intended by God infallibly to secure the good promised to every individual person, who in regard of an external and visible denomination, were to be accounted for his seed, but there is a certain number chosen of God from eternity, actually to inherit the good promised, who in time are savingly wrought upon, and these, in a special and peculiar manner, are in the esteem of God accounted for the seed.

Fifthly, That yet they were the natural seed of *Abraham*, as immediately descending from his own loins , who were intended in this promise, as the next and immediate subjects of it , and that the natural seed of *Abraham* intended in this first Proposition.

And that is the thing that I shall now apply my self to the proof of.

## C H A P. I I.

The truth of the first Proposition, as before explained, evidenced two wayes.

1. More generally, by such Arguments as will evince, that all Abraham's immediate natural seed, one as well as another, were intended as the immediate and next subjects of this promise.

2. More particularly, by instancing in such of his natural seed, as upon a supposition, of whose being intended in the promise, it will necessarily follow, that all his natural seed were in like manner intended, and proving that they were indeed intended by God in that promise.

**T**HAT when God, at his first entering Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him and his seed, intended his natural seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, as the immediate and next subjects of that promise; may be evinced two wayes:

1. More generally.
2. More particularly.

I. More generally: And thus I shall only offer a two-fold Argument.

The first shall be taken from the Promise it self, as taken according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of those words it is express in, and it is this :

What God speaks unto men ought to be interpreted and understood according to the literal and most proper sense and signification of those words he expresseth himself in , unless there be some necessary Reason enforcing a recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words.

But according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words of this Promise, now made to *Abraham* his natural seed, immediately descending from his own loins, and that universally one as well as the other must be intended , as the immediate and next subjects of it, and there is no Reason enforcing our recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words : Therefore we ought to interpret and understand them, as intending his immediate natural seed , as the immediate and next subjects of that Promise. When God said to *Abraham* , He would be a God to him and to his seed in their generations, surely the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words, wherein the Promise is expressed,must needs lead him to apply it as to himself, so to his immediate natural seed , and that universally.

It's true, God promised to **Abraham**, That he would make him the Father of many Nations ; and doubtless **Abraham** did understand the Promise, as reaching and taking in all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto.

But no Reason could be drawn from the words of the Promise it self , why either **Abraham**, or any other since, should understand it, as intending his remote or adopted seed, to the excluding of his own natural seed, as immediately descending from him.

Now that what God speaks ought to be interpreted, as before exprest, cannot be doubted by any.

And therefore all that possibly can be objected, for the invalidating this argument, is, That there is a necessity of interpreting and understanding this Promise, as now made to **Abraham**, differently from what the literal and proper signification of the words seems to import : Whether there be any such necessity shall be considered by and by.

In the mean time let it be observed , that we have the letter of the Promise on our side , as to the interpretation put upon it.

The second Argument shall be taken from **Abraham**'s applying of the seal or token of that Covenant, whereof the Promise, under consideration, was a principal part, to his immediate and natural seed, and that universally to one as well as to another , and that under that very notion and consideration, as the seal and token of the Covenant,

Hence I argue,

If *Abraham*, according to the will and appointment of God , did apply the seal or token of that Covenant ( wherein the Promise , under consideration , was one special Article on Gods part ) to all his immediate natural seed , to one as well as to the other , and that under that very notion and consideration , as the seal or token of the Covenant , then God in that Promise must needs intend all his immediate natural seed , as the Subjects of it : but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Assumption sure cannot once be questioned by any that have read over the Book of Genesis : yet exabundanti.

Let me touch upon the proof of it in the several branches or clauses of it : It contains three Branches.

i. That *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of that Covenant , wherein this Promise is contained , unto all his immediate natural seed : If that term Seal offend any , let them keep only to the other word token ; it's all one as to my present purpose . That Circumcision was the seal or token of the Covenant , that God now entred into with *Abraham* and his seed , is past all doubt ; 'tis expressly called , *The Token of the Covenant* , Gen. 17.11. *Ye shall circumcise the foreskin of your flesh , and it shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you.* A token of the Covenant : Of what Covenant ? Why , of that , no doubt , now established with *Abraham* , and his

his seed in their generations : and that *Abraham* did apply this token of the Covenant to all his natural seed, is evident, partly from Gods Command , read that Gen. 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. partly from *Abraham's* practice ; mention is expressly made of his circumcising of *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, verse 23. with Gen 21. 4.

But some will say , There's is no mention of his circumcising his Sons by *Keturah*.

To that I answer, No more is there mention made of *Jacob's* circumcision, nor of his twelve Sons circumcision, and yet shall it be questioned, whether they were circumcised or no ? The command of God engaging it, and the testimony that God gives of *Abraham's* faithfulness , and his circumcising all his male servants , is super-abundant evidence that he did circumcise them, though their circumcision be not mentioned : So that it's undeniable, that *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of the Covenant to all his Seed, immediately descending from his own loins.

2. That *Abraham* did apply this seal or token of the Covenant to his seed , under that very notion and consideration as the seal or token of it , this is evident thus :

Look under what notion God commanded it to be applyed, under that notion and consideration *Abraham* did apply it : That *Abraham* did apply it under that notion as the seal or token of the Covenant, as he was commanded, is unquestionable, from the forementioned testimony that God gave of him.

Now that God did command it to be applyed under that notion and consideration, is evident, because in the Command, concerning the application of it, he calls it the Covenant , *My Covenant shall be in your flesh*: that is, the token of my Covenant, and that as the token of it.

3. That what *Abraham* did was according to the will and appointment of God , this is past doubt by what is already said ; *Abraham* acted in circumcising his Children according to the express command he had received from God ; so that the Assumption is in every branch and clause of it undeniabe.

Secondly, For the Consequence in the Major Proposition, *viz.* That in as much as *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of the Covenant, as now expressed, it must needs follow, that God in this Promise did intend his immediate natural seed, as the first subjects of it : The validity of this Consequence, if any shall question it , will appear these three wayes.

First, From the sameness of the word used in the Promise and in the Command , concerning the application of the seal : The Promise is, *To thee and to thy Seed*; the Command is, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant , thou and thy Seed.*

Now who can once imagine , that this term Seed should be used restrictively in the Promise, as intending only one or more of *Abraham's Children* ; exclusive of the rest , and universally

sally in the Command, as intending all his Children.

That it is to be understood universally in the Command, is past all doubt ; God explains himself in the very next words, *Every Man-child amongst you shall be circumcised.*

Now those that should take this term Seed restrictively in the Promise, had need for their acquitment in the sight of God for their so doing, have as clear a warrant from God as Abraham had, to take it in an unlimited fence in the Command ; whether they have so or no, concerns them to look to it.

Secondly, It appears from hence, because otherwise the seal or token of the Covenant should, and that according to the appointment of God, be aplyed to some, unto whom it signified and betokened nothing at all ; it should be applyed, and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, to some wholly uninterested and unconcerned in the Covenant, of which it was the seal or token.

Now how remote is it from a rational probability, that God should appoint the token of the Covenant, and that under that notion and consideration, as the token of it, to be applyed to persons neither externally nor internally interested or concerned in the Covenant, of which it was the token, let but any sober person exercise his reason, and see whether there be so much as the remotest probability of it.

It's true , God might have commanded the same thing to have been acted upon persons, under another notion or consideration , for some special end appointed by himself ; but that he should appoint the same action , with reference unto all, and that to be performed under one and the same notion and consideration, and yet, that some of these should be in Covenant, and others not at all concerned in it , is a thing not to be supposed by any man , that hath the free use of his own reason.

Thirdly, It appears, because in case the seal or token of the Covenant had been applyed to any in the fence afore expressed, no way interested or concerned in the Covenant , nor the Promise thereof , then God had spoken that which had been absolutely false , which far be it from any man, that pretends to Christianity, once to imagine : yet the denying the same persons to be intended in the Promise , that were intended in the Command , concerning the application of the seal, doth necessarily infer it. For pray observe it : Saith the Lord of Circumcision, *It shall be the token of the Covenant between me and you,* Gen. 17. 11. Now had any of these male-children , whose circumcision is commanded in the foregoing verses , been wholly unconcerned in the Covenant , then it could not have been a token of the Covenant between God and them; and consequently it had been false to say , it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them : for according to the opinions in this first

first Proposition opposed, it was not the token of the Covenant between God and them , in as much as the male-children, now intended, were not in the Covenant , or there was no Covenant between God and them.

Now for God to command, that every Male-child amongst them should be circumcised , and then to say of Circumcision, as so applyed, that it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them, whereas there was some of those Male-children wholly uninterested in this Covenant , or betwixt God and whom there was no such Covenant , had been absolutely false ; for it was not , it could not possibly be a token of the Covenant between God and them , between him and whom there was no Covenant : there can be no token of a Covenant between whom there is no Covenant made : But now saith God, *It shall be a token of the Covenant between me and them :* So that to grant, that *Abraham* , according to the will and appointment of God did apply the seal or token of the Covenant to all his immediate natural Seed, and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, and yet to affirm, that some of his natural Seed were not in Covenant, or not intended in the Promises thereof, is to ascribe falsehood unto God, or to charge him with speaking what was absolutely false.

And therefore undoubtedly *Abraham's* whole natural Seed were intended in the Promise , as the immediate and next subjects of it.

\*  
Secondly,

Secondly, Let us instance in such of *Abraham's* immediate Children, as upon supposition of their being intended in the Promise, under consideration, it will undoubtedly follow, that all his immediate Children were in it: and thus I shall instance in these two of his Children, that the Scripture makes more frequent mention of, viz. *Ishmael* and *Isaac*: and I shall begin with the latter first.

First, That *Isaac* was intended in this Promise, as one of the Subjects of it, is fully evident from that one passage of God to *Abraham*, Gen. 21.12. cited and expounded by the Apostle, Rom. 9. 7, 8. *In Isaac shall thy seed be called.* We read in the tenth verse, *Sarah's* request to *Abraham*, to cast out *Hagar* and her Son *Ishmael*: Now this was grievous to *Abraham*. God had promised to be a God to him and to his seed: *Ishmael* is one of his Seed; hence to cast him out, and thereby disinherit him of the blessing promised, was very grievous to *Abraham*. Now God to allay *Abraham's* grief tells him, Though he should answer *Sarah's* request, yet *in Isaac should his Seed be called*; that is, in *Isaac* and his line the Promise should have its accomplishment. Though *Ishmael* was cast out, and thereby disinherited of the good promised, yet the Promise should stand firm, and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his line, which could not have been, had he not been intended in the Promise: had not *Isaac* been intended, not exclusive of others, but inclusive of himself,

the

the Promise could not have received its accomplishment in him, but had failed in the ejection of *Ishmael*: and hence the Apostle tells us, That *Abraham* sojourned in *Canaan*, as a Stranger in a strange Land, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, heirs with him of the same Promise: Of what Promise? Surely of that, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to him, and to his Seed, and to give him and them the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession: both these Promises are joyned together as one Promise, Gen. 17.6. Now of this Promise *Isaac* was an heir with *Abraham*, and therefore must needs be included in it as one of the Subjects of it.

Secondly, That *Ishmael* was intended as part of *Abraham's* Seed in this Promise, is evident by this one Consideration.

Not to multiply, where truth is sufficiently evident, viz. His ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, and his being disinherited of the Covenant and Promise thereby.

It's true, his bare ejection out of *Abraham's* Family would not demonstrate his being in *Abraham's* Covenant, and under the Promise thereof; while in his Family he had Servants in his house, who yet might be after cast out, but that would not conclude them to have had an interest in his Covenant: but now as by that his ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, he was disinherited of, or disinterested in the Promise, or was divested of his right and title to it, doth undeniably evidence his right and title to it antece-

antecedent to that his ejection ; for he could not be divested or disinherited of that he never had, or was never an heir unto.

Now that *Ishmael*, with and by means of his rejection out of *Abraham's Family*, was divested of a right and title he afore had to the Covenant, and to the promises thereof, is evident by these two Reasons.

First, Because his ejection was typical of their ejection out of the Gospel Church, and rejection from the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace, who under a Profession of Christianity, or of being the Covenant-people of God, do adhere to the Law for Righteousness and Life. That *Ishmael's* casting out of *Abraham's Family* was thus typical, is expressly affirmed by the Apostle, Gal. 4.30. compared with the foregoing Context.

Now his bare ejection out of *Abraham's Family*, could not have made him a proper type of the persons beforementioned, in as much as then there had been no direct Analogy or proportion between the type and antitype. How his mere casting out of *Abraham's Family* should represent, or foreshew, and predict the ejection of the persons forementioned out of the Gospel Church, and divestment of all title to the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace, cannot be imagined ; for as much as others might be cast out of *Abraham's Family*, whose ejection was not of any such typical signification.

Secondly,

Secondly, That *Ishmael*, together with and by means of his ejection out of *Abraham's Family*, was divested of a right and title, which, while in his house, he had to the Covenant and promises thereof, is evident, because *Sarah*, in her request to *Abraham* to cast him out, proposed that as her end, viz. That he might not inherit with *Isaac* her Son; Gen. 21. 10. *Cast out this bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac:* And that it was the good promised in this Covenant, that she desires his disinheriting of, is evident by *Abraham's* griefs; had it been only the temporal possessions of *Abraham*, his not inheriting of which she proposeth as her end, in desiring his ejection, there had been no reason of *Abraham's* grief, in as much as he was under the promise of outward blessings, notwithstanding that his ejection: Now there had been no reason for *Sarah*, to propose that end in her request, to have him cast out, unless he had, and would continue to have had, during his abode in the house, a like visible right and title to the Promise that *Isaac* had, she might have desired his ejection for some other reason, but for that, that he might not inherit with *Isaac*, she could not rationally do, it would have been an impertinent reason, for her to have desired his ejection, that he might not inherit with her own Son, in case he had no right nor title to the promised Inheritance, whilst in the house.

For a woman to desire her Husband to cast out

out a Servant out of the family for that reason, that he might not inherit with her own Children, when as whether he should continue or be cast out of the family, he could lay no claim to the Inheritance, would be ridiculous : Hence Sarah's pleading that reason, or propounding that end of her request, plainly implies, that Ishmael, during his abode in Abraham's Family, had at least a visible right and title to the inheritance promised, which would be disanulled by that his ejection : Hence it is evident, Ishmael, as well as Isaac, was intended in that Promise, and that both were joyned Heirs to, or Subjects of that Promise, as externally made to Abraham, with reference to his Seed.

Now then seeing these two, viz. Ishmael and Isaac, were intended, there can be no reason imagined, why we should suppose Abraham's other Children to be excluded ; for they were either elected or not elected ; if they were, their case was the same with Isaac's, if not, their case was the same with Ishmael's ; and therefore both Ishmael and Isaac being intended, there is no shew of reason to suppose the other excluded ; but we may partly from the parity of their cases, with the case of the one or the other of these two, and partly from the evidence of the foregoing Arguments, positively conclude, that all Abraham's natural Seed, according to the intendment of this first proposition, were intended in this promise, as the first and next subjects of it : but let that suffice for the proof of the first proposition.

## CHAP. III.

*Objections against the first subordinate Proposition considered and answered.*

Thus having seen somewhat (for much more might be produced) of that evidence the Scriptures give in, for the confirmation of this first Proposition, I shall now consider the Objections I have yet met with, or can possibly imagine may be made, that have any appearance of weight in them, against the truth hitherto asserted and pleaded for: That which I plead for is this, That God in that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein he engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his seed in their generations, intended his natural Seed, and that indefinitely one as well as another, immediately proceeding from his own loins, as the immediate and next Subjects of it. Now at least some (I suppose not all) of those, whose judgment and practice vary from the truth pleaded for, will contend, that this term Seed is to be understood in a restrained sense, as only intended of one or more of *Abraham's* immediate Children, to the excluding of the rest, and that it is not to be extended to all indefinitely. But yet, I

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suppose,

Suppose, they are not agreed among themselves, which to assign as the proper Subjects of this Promise; some have denied *Isaac* to be the seed or part of the seed here intended; others, and I suppose the major part of our opposers, deny that *Ishmael* was intended, or ought to be accounted as part of the seed here spoken of: As for those that judge *Isaac* was not intended in this Promise, the only ground they go upon, for ought I have yet met with, is this Supposition, viz. That God made a twofold Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed, the one a legal or temporal Covenant, consisting only in temporal promises, and requiring only an external obedience; the other a Covenant of Grace, consisting of spiritual promises, and requiring internal and spiritual obedience; and they conceive, that this Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his Seed, mentioned Gen. 17. 7. was only a legal or temporal Covenant; and that the Covenant of Grace is that formerly spoken of, Gen. 12. 3. and again re-established with *Isaac* at the nineteenth verse of this seventeenth Chapter: And then the Objection that the persons of this persuasion raise against our Proposition in the sense given, is to this purpose: That this term Seed is not to be understood in that extensive sense given of it, in as much as this Covenant, mentioned in this seventh verse, was only a temporal or legal Covenant established with *Abraham*, as a natural Father, and his fleshly seed, and not the Covenant of Grace, established with him, as a spiritual Father, and with his spiritual

spiritual seed ; now Isaac being a Child of promise, and consequently to be accounted of Abraham's spiritual seed , could not be intended in that promise, which alone intended his fleshly or natural seed.

*Answ.* I answer, That Isaac in particular was intended in this Promise, and that as a principal Subject of it , as it respected Abraham's natural seed, hath been already proved, and as for the Objection now made, it involves the framers of it in such absurdities and contradictions , and supposing it granted , would so little advantage the cause, the promotion of which is in the ultimate design of it aimed at , that it needs no reply at all ; I shall therefore only in a direct opposition to that Supposition, this Objection is grounded upon, affirm, that there was but one Covenant established between God and Abraham, and his seed, and that was a Covenant of Grace , and the very same for substance that believers are now under, and consequently that that Promise in Gen. 12. 3. was either a branch of this Covenant , or rather the very same promise with this, under consideration, expressed in other terms. And that that Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the same with this mentioned ver. 7. There are several branches of this general Assertion : As,

First, That there was but one Covenant made and established between God and Abraham, with reference to himself and his seed ; I do not say,

that there was but one Covenant made with the seed of *Abraham*, understanding that term Seed of his Race or Posterity in following ages, but I say, there was but one established with *Abraham*, wherein himself, in common with his Seed, was concerned; now this appears from the constant phrase of Scripture alwayes, where speaking of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, speaking in the singular number, the Covenant, and not in the plural, Covenants.

Secondly, I say, this was a Covenant of Grace.

Thirdly, That it was the very same Covenant for substance that Believers are now under.

Fourthly, That that Promise, Gen. 12. 3. is one branch of the Covenant now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, or rather the same Promise with this mentioned, in our first Proposition expressed in different terms; these things I shall speak to hereafter, and the truth of them will, I doubt not, fully appear by the proof of the second Proposition, and therefore I shall say nothing to them at present.

Lastly, That the Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the very same mentioned verse 7. this is sufficiently evident to any that will but read the whole Chapter. In the former part of the Chapter, we read how God promiseth to establish his Covenant

Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, that is, to endure while *Abraham* should have a Seed upon earth : Now at verse 19. the Lord shews *Abraham*, in which of his Seed, and his Line, or posterity this Promise should take place, and have its accomplishment, and that was *Isaac*. Therefore observe how the Text runs, *And God said, Sarah shall bear thee a Son, and I will establish my Covenant with him.* Mark, here is no intimation of any other Covenant, different from that before mentioned ; he doth not say, *I will also make, or I will establish a Covenant, or another Covenant, but I will establish my Covenant :* What Covenant ? Doubtless that before entred in with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed in their generations ; and this limitation of the Covenant, as afore made and established, with *Abraham*, in reference to his Seed in their generations, unto *Isaac* alone, doth plainly imply, that in the first establishment of it, *Abraham's* whole Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were included and intended ; for what need an explanatory limitation of it, in regard of the establishment thereof, for an everlasting Covenant to *Isaac* and his Seed, had it not been more comprehensive in the first promulgation of it ; and it is as if the Lord should say, Though I have entred Covenant with thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, and have received and taken in thy whole Seed, as proceeding immediately from thine own loins, universally and

indefinitely one as well as another, into a Covenant relation, together with thee with my self, yet my meaning is, not that this Covenant-relation between me and thy Seed, shall be continued in each of their respective lines, throughout their respective generations; but it is with *Isaac* that I will establish my Covenant, and with his Seed, as the person in whom, and in whose Seed, my Covenant shall take place, and be accomplished; though thy whole Seed be intended in the Promise, as the next and immediate Subjects of it, yet the Promise in the full latitude and extent of it, as it runs to Seed in their generations, for a Promise to continue successively throughout all generations, shall only take place and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his Line: But not to spend time upon this, that *Isaac* was intended in this Promise is evident beyond all rational contradiction, and that is all at present I contend for.

*Object.* 2. Secondly, Others, and I suppose, vastly the major part of our opposers in the main truth pleaded for, conceive that it was *Isaac* alone intended as the only Subject of that Promise, and consequently that *Ishmael*, and the other children of *Abraham*, were excluded from any right or title to it: And there are three Objections made against our extending that Promise, to the including and taking in *Ishmael*, and the Sons of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, as the joyned Subjects with *Isaac* of it,

First, Say some, as God promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed , so he promised the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession to that Seed, to whom he promised to be a God ; but the Land of *Canaan* was never given to, nor intended for, either *Ishmael*, or any of *Abraham's* other Children by *Keturah*, or any of their Seeds, and therefore certainly neither *Ishmael*, nor any of *Abraham's* Seed by *Keturah*, could be intended in that Promise ; for do we think that God would promise that which he never intended to give ? or shall we think that God would promise the Land of *Canaan* to all *Abraham's* Seed, and yet never mind his promise after, nor regard to make good what he had promised.

*Answ.* To that I answer two things.

First , That, in that any of *Abraham's* Seed did not actually possess the Land of *Canaan*, nor in that God intended not that they should possess it , it is no Argument they were not intended in, as the Subjects of, this grand Promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to them in their generations : This is evident , because some ; who were undoubtedly the Subjects of this Promise, never did, nor was it intended by God , that they should actually possess that Land ; *Abraham* himself, who was the prime and principal party in this Covenant, according to the letter of it, and consequently the undoubted Subject of this Promise, as referring to himself, never had, nor was it intended by God, that he should have the actual possession of this

Land; so for *Isaac* and *Jacob*, Heirs with him of the same Promise, they never had, nor was it Gods intendment they should have, the actual possession of that Land. But

Two things are replyed to this.

First, Though they did not possess it in their own persons, yet in their posterity they did; their posterity had the actual possession of it, and God gave it unto them only as a reversion, to be possessed by their Children, when the sin of the Inhabitants was full.

To that I answer, It is certain all their posterity did not possess it, witness the whole race and posterity of *Isaac* descended by *Esan*.

But you will say, Yet some of their posterity did possess it, and that was enough to verifie the Promise unto them, considering under what notion it was promised, viz. as afore expressed, a reversion to be enjoyed by their posterity.

To that I answer, It is true, and so for what appears, the posterity of any or of all of *Abraham's* other Children, should have had the joynct possession with *Isaac* and *Jacob's* posterity, had not their Fathers forfeited their own and their posterities right and title to the Promise, and their not inheriting, through an antecedent forfeiture of the Promise, is no evidence that their first Parents, as immediately proceeding from *Abraham*, were not intended either in that

or the former grand Promise, of the Covenant.

Secondly, It is replyed , that though *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* did not, nor was it intended by God , that they should in their own persons, at that time, as then upon earth, enjoy the Land of *Canaan*, yet there is a time when they shall have the personal enjoyment of it , they shall arise again, and during the thousand years reign of Christ upon earth , shall have the promise in the very letter made good unto them.

To that I answer , Not to divert to debates excentrical to our present Question , suppose that notion prove true , I would say the same of *Ishmael*, and the other Children of *Abraham*, both he and they, with their respective posterities , supposing their not being finally cast out from the Covenant , and the Promises thereof, through their own or their Progenitors sin, shall partake with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* in that their supposed felicity , and therefore neither their not actual possessing , nor Gods intention, that they should not actually possess that Land, will prove, that they were not intended in that grand Promise, their case was no other than the case of several others , who were undoubtedly intended in that Promise.

Secondly, I answer, That the Land of *Canaan* was either a meer temporal good , and the enjoyment of it only a temporal mercy , or else it

it was a type and pledge of a higher good, viz. of that City that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God; and answerably taking it as a type, it was a spiritual good, and the enjoyment of it a spiritual blessing, and an essential part of the Covenant of Grace, the Land of *Canaan* must be looked upon under the one or the other of these notions, or under both, according to the letter under the former, according to the mystical or typical sense under the latter. Now let our Opposites tell us, how or under what notions they look upon that Land, the subject matter of that Promise: if they say they look upon it under the first notion, namely, as a temporal good, and the Jews possessing of it only as a temporal blessing, then, I say, it was only an appendant, and not pertaining to the essence of the Covenant, and the promise of it only a definite promise, made to *Abraham's Seed*, collectively or generally taken, and answerably the Promise was verified in that any of his Seed, had the possession of it: Indefinite promises, as made to any species or sorts of persons, collectively considered, are equivalent to particular promises, and they are verified, in case only some of that species, or sort of persons, have the good promised: That this promise of the Land of *Canaan*, supposing it to be only a temporal promise, is thus to be taken, is unquestionable from the way and manner of Gods performing of it, had it been a promise to *Abraham and his Seed*, distributively or particularly taken, it must have been made good to each particular

ticular Subject of the promise , both to *Abraham* and all his Seed universally, which it is evident it was not. If they say it was a spiritual promise, or the promise of a spiritual good, a higher and greater good typified by it : then I say, it was of the Essence of the Covenant, and was either in the letter , or in the spiritual sense and meaning of it, performed both to *Abraham* and to all his Seed in their generations, whether *Isaac*, or *Ishmael*, or his Sons by *Keturah*, who did not through a failure in the performance of the condition of the Covenant, loose their right and title to the promise of it ; that is , though they had not the good promised it self in the letter , yet they had the good typified by that Land, and principally intended in the Promise : A further proof of this I need not add than the Promise it self considered, in conjunction with the faithfulness of God in the performance of his Promise.

Thirdly, If they will say, they look upon it under both notions , which I conceive is most agreeable to the mind of God in that Promise; then I say as before, twas as a temporal promise, only an appendant to the Covenant , as a spiritual promise of the Essence of it , and answerably was made and made good to *Abraham's* Seed, both collectively and distributively taken, in the sense afore opened ; from all it evidently appears, that in that neither *Ishmael*, nor the Sons of *Keturah*, did, nor was it intended by God , that they should enjoy the Land of *Ca-*

*naan,*

*uzan*, it will not follow, that they were not intended in that grand Promise, wherein God ingageth himself, to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, they might be intended in that Promise, and yet not actually enjoy that Land promised, as many others, who were undoubtedly intended in the former Promise, yet never actually in the letter enjoyed the good of that Promise.

*Object.* 2. Say others, If *Ishmael* were intended in this Promise, and received as one of *Abraham's* Seed into his Covenant, why doth *Abraham* pray so earnestly for him, Gen. 17.18? Doth not his praying so earnestly for him, at least, strongly intimate, he had no right to, or interest in the Covenant afore established with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed? If *Ishmael* was under the promise of having God a God to him, what need *Abraham* pray so earnestly that he might live before God?

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* I answer, May not a promised good be prayed for? Or may not a father pray that his child may live, grow up, and enjoy the good of promises relating to this life, and give comfortable discoveries of his interest in the Promises of the Covenant? Who can question, but that he may? But the true reason of *Abraham's* prayer for *Ishmael*, was an intimation given by God, in those promises made with reference to that child to be born of *Sarah*, of what is more plainly after expressed, that he should

should be the special Child, in whom, and in whose line the Seed should be called, that is, with whom and with whose Seed the Covenant should be established, according to the full extent and latitude of the promises of it, but this is no intimation at all, much less a conclusive Argument, that *Ishmael* was not at present taken into Covenant, and intended in the Promises of it, as one of the immediate Subjects thereof.

*Object. 3.* And that which by most of our Opposites is especially insisted upon, is a supposed inconsistency between what is affirmed in this our first Proposition, viz. That God in this grand Promise of the Covenant intended all *Abraham's* natural Seed universally and indefinitely, one as well as another, as the next and immediate Subjects of it, considering what the sacred Story relates of *Ishmael* in particular, one of *Abraham's* Seed, affirmed by us to be intended in that Promise, and other Principles and Assertions constantly maintained by us, who ground the infant-seed of believing parents right to and interest in the Covenant, upon this its first establishment with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations; these Principles and Assertions, with which what is affirmed of all *Abraham's* natural Seed, and of *Ishmael* in particular, is supposed to be inconsistent, are more especially these two.

*First,* That that Covenant, now established with

with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Grace; and the very same for substance with that under which Believers are under the Gospel administration.

Secondly, That the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, a Covenant from a standing in which none can fall. Now it is objected, That if it be true as we affirm, that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, was the Covenant of Grace, and that *Ishmael* in particular was intended in this Promise, and answerably taken into this Covenant with *Abraham*, as one of his Seed there intended, then the Covenant of Grace must be granted to be a mutable and changeable Covenant, a Covenant that may be broken, contrary to our other principles, seeing it is evident, and granted by us, that in case *Ishmael* was ever in this Covenant, he did break it, and was cast out of it, and was disinherited of the promise contained in it; and if so, then it will follow, contrary to what we elsewhere affirm, that a man may be in the Covenant of Grace to day, and cast out to morrow, and then may be in again within a few dayes after, and yet cast out again, and in the close finally perish. Now it is said, How can Principles or Assertions, lying in such a diametrical opposition one to another, be all true? Therefore sure we must either grant, that *Ishmael* was not intended in this Promise, and consequently not one of this Seed of *Abraham*, with

with whom, in conjunction with *Abraham* himself, God never entred Covenant, or else that Covenant was not the Covenant of Grace, under which Believers now are, or else that the Covenant of Grace is mutable, and may be broken; that persons may be in it, and after cast out and dispossessed of that good they had sometimes a Covenant-right and title to.

Before I return a direct Answer to this Objection, I shall premise, that this Objection is urged by our Opposites to a twofold end or purpose.

First, It is urged by some, to disprove or overthrow what we affirm of this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, viz. That it is the Covenant of Grace, the same for substance that Believers in Gospel times are under. Say they, This Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his natural Seed, might be broken, but the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken; one might be in that Covenant to day, and cast out to morrow; witness *Ishmael*, who though taken into Covenant, yet was soon cast out again; but it is otherwise with the Covenant of Grace, and the persons admitted into it, that is, a Covenant that cannot be broken, persons once in that Covenant are never cast out again; and therefore this could not be a Covenant of Grace, but a legal Covenant, as some call it, a temporal Covenant, as others.

Secondly,

Secondly, It is urged by others , in a way of opposition to what is affirmed concerning Ishmael's being intended in this Promise, and consequently received into Covenant with Abraham: These grant that this was a Covenant of Grace, and hold with us, that the Covenant of Grace ~~of Grace~~ is a Covenant that cannot be broken. Now say they, it is ridiculous to affirm, that Ishmael was in this Covenant , seeing it is certain he never enjoyed the good promised , which he should undoubtedly have done, had he been taken in as a party in it. The Covenant of Grace, say they, infallibly secures the good promised in it to all that have admission into it ; it is a Covenant that is immutable , those that are once in it are never cast out , but shall infallibly enjoy the good promised : but Ishmael enjoyed not the good promised in this Covenant ; therefore it is ridiculous to say, he was ever taken into it. So that we may see our Opposites are not agreed among themselves , some granting that Ishmael was intended in that Promise , and consequently that he was a party in that Covenant , but deny that that Covenant was a Covenant of Grace: Others granting, that that was a Covenant of Grace , but deny Ishmael to be a party in it , whence it appears, that in all these three Assertions, viz. that Ishmael was intended in that Promise , that the Covenant,in which the Promise is contained, is a Covenant of Grace. That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken, we have the suffrage of some of our Opposites, as they are taken severally.

But

But you will say, They all agree, they cannot be all true taken conjunctively : It is true, they do so ; and where their mistake lies, either as to what we affirm, or as to the truth it self, shall be now considered.

First, And I shall first shew in what sence we hold and maintain the Covenant of Grace, to be an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken.

Secondly ; Lay down some Propositions for the vindicating the truth asserted in this first Proposition, for carrying any appearance of repugnancy to that Principle held and maintained by us ; in the sence it is held and maintained by us, concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace.

For the first : and thus we must observe a twofold distinction.

First, We must distinguish between an external and visible, and an internal and invisible being in Covenant, or between the Covenant of Grace, as externally and visibly, and as internally and invisibly plighted, or mutually entred between God and men ; that there is an external and visible being in Covenant, or that there is an external and visible plighting, or mutual entring of Covenant between God and men, where yet there is not an internal and invisible being in Covenant, nor any internal mutual en-

tring Covenant between God and men ; is evident through the whole Scripture, and is so demonstratively proved by others, especially Mr. Cobbett of New-England, that it is wholly superfluous to add any thing, I shall therefore only say, that unless we do grant this distinction, we must hold, that either Christ hath no visible Body, Church, or People in the World, or else that some may be of the visible Body, Church or People of Christ, who yet are not in any sence in the Covenant of Grace ; the former sure none will affirm, and the granting the latter will grant what I contend for, as will appear in the process of our discourse.

Secondly, We must distinguish between being in Covenant, through a personal acceptation of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, and being in Covenant, by virtue of the gracious tenour of the Covenant it self, as made with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations; that there is a being in Covenant by a personal acceptation of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, will be denied by none ; and that there is a being in Covenant, or being under the promises of the Covenant, by virtue of the gracious tenour of the Covenant it self, will I hope sufficiently appear from the proof of this and our next Proposition. Now when we say, the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, we intend it of the Covenant as personally,

sonally, and that intirely and sincerely entered by a truly regenerate Soul, and not of the Covenant as only externally and unsincerely entered by Hypocrites, nor of the Covenant as made with believing Parents, with reference to their natural Seed; and the meaning of what is affirmed concerning the immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant of Grace is only this, that when once a Soul is savingly wrought upon, to a rightly closing in with Christ, and a saving closing with the terms of the Covenant, that Soul shall never totally and finally fall away, so as to suffer an absolute and total loss of that Grace wrought in it, nor be absolutely cast out of a Covenant state and relation God-ward: whether these promises, upon the warrant of which this immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant is asserted and maintained, will prove any more, shall be considered, at least so far as concerns my present purpose, by and by. Having then given the fence in which we hold the Covenant of Grace to be immutable and unchangeable, I proceed to the second thing promised, the Propositions, and they are these.

First, That this Covenant now established between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, which I grant, yea affirm, that it was a Covenant of Grace, the same in substance that Believers are still under, was and still is a conditional Covenant: Let not that term *conditional* offend, I intend no more than

what I suppose will on all hands be granted, viz. That as God promised good to *Abraham*, with reference both to himself and his Seed in their generations; so he required the performance of duty as from *Abraham* himself, so from his Seed in their respective generations: In brief thus, this Covenant contained promises of good from God, yet with a restipulation of duty from the parties with whom it was made, and unto whom the promises did appertain; and this is essential to the very being of a Covenant as properly taken: It is true, this term Covenant is variously used in Scripture, sometimes for a bare promise on Gods part, sometimes for the restipulation on mans part, sometimes for the token of the Covenant, but these are improper significations of the word; when it is properly taken, it alwayes signifies a mutual compact between God and man, wherein God ingageth himself by promise to them, and ingageth them to the performance of what himself hath constituted to be their duty: a Covenant in general when properly taken, and consequently this Covenant in particular, which must partake of the general nature of Covenants, every Species must partake of its Genus, being *quiddam complexum*; implying two or more parties covenanting, so two parties covenanted, the giving of some good on the one part, and the return of some performance on the other, and that as indispensably necessary to the preservation of the Covenant inviolate on each part.

Secondly,

Secondly, That this restipulation or condition on Abraham's part, did concern him, both as a single person, and as a Parent, standing in a parental relation towards his Seed, taken in as joynt parties with himself into covenant, my meaning is evident, Abraham stood in a double capacity, as a single party, with whom God entred covenant, and as a father of children, to whom the promises of the Covenant did in common with himself appertain. Now as Abraham, as a single person in covenant, was to accept of, and perform the conditions of the Covenant, he was in that capacity ingaged to by God, so as a parent he had something of duty incumbent upon him, with reference to his Seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, and as his faithful performance of that duty incumbent upon him in his single capacity, so his performing that duty incumbent upon him as a parent, in reference to his Seed, was absolutely necessary in order to his enjoying the good promised, with reference both to himself and his Seed: The truth of this Proposition is evident from these two places of Scripture compared together, Gen. 17. 1. and Gen. 18. 19. Walk before me, and be thou perfect, There was Abraham's duty, in reference to himself as a single person, with whom the Covenant was entred; For I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep judgment and justice, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him; that is, that he may be a God to him,

and his Seed after him : There was Abraham's duty, as a Parent and Master of a Family, and under this term *Command* all other duties, subserving or respecting to their walking in the way of the Lord, were implied and comprehended. Now saith the Lord, *Abraham will thus command his Children and Household*, that the Lord may bring upon him what he hath spoken of him : Whence it appears, that *Abraham's performance of his duty towards his Children and Household, was a necessary condition of Gods bringing upon him, or making good to him, what he had promised*, in reference to his Children and Household, and that without the performance of that duty he could not expect, according to the true intent and meaning of the Promise, that God should bring that good upon him, or do that good to him : and what is said of *Abraham* is true of all his Seed, supposing them under that double capacity : *Abraham* was to be a pattern to all his Seed, both in privileges and in duties.

Thirdly, That whatever was the condition or restipulation of the Covenant as made with *Abraham*, was the condition or restipulation required of his natural Seed, and to be actually performed by them in their own persons, so soon as they came to that maturity of age, as rendered them capable thereof, and that as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of their covenant-relation with God, into which they, as *Abraham's natural Seed,*

Seed, were admitted in their infancy; though God was pleased to enter covenant, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with his Seed together with him, and his accepting of the Covenant for himself and them, constituted a covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, and that covenant-relation was continued during his Seeds infant capacity upon *Abraham's* account, yet when they grew up to a capacity of a personal ingaging with God in a Covenant way, and performing the restipulation required. Now the continuance of that covenant-relation between God and them, indispensably required their personal accepting of, and performing that restipulation or condition, that *Abraham* in their intancy had accepted for them, and their non-acceptance or non-performance of that condition did, *ipso facto*, disannul the Covenant, or forfeit their right to, and interest in it and the promises of it; God stood ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~noe~~ longer by virtue of that Promise obliged to be a God unto them; and for them to have supposed the continuance of that covenant-relation between God and them, into which they were afore admitted, and upon that account expected the good promised, without their personal performance of the duty the Covenant did oblige them to, had been a groundless presumption. The truth of this Proposition is evident in part from what hath been already said, and will more fully appear, when I come to the proof of my second Proposition: *Abraham's* commanding his Children and Household to keep the way of

the Lord, in order to that end, namely, their enjoying the good promised necessarily supposeth it; for why should he command them to keep the way of the Lord, in relation to such an end, if their keeping that way had no necessary reference to that end, but the end had been attained without their keeping that way; besides, were not this true, there could have been no such thing, as breach of covenant, found among any of *Abraham's* natural Seed, as will be obvious to every ordinary capacity. Before I proceed further, let me note by the way, that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, implied a twofold condition, necessary to be observed in order to Gods making good the promises of it, referring to his Seed.

First, There was a condition incumbent on *Abraham* himself, there was something of duty required of him, with reference to his Seed, viz. that he command them to keep the way of the Lord, as is observed in the foregoing Proposition.

Secondly, There was a condition incumbent upon the Seed, as grown up and become capable of understanding and performing it, that is, That they walk in the way of the Lord; and supposing that either *Abraham* had failed in his duty, or his Seed in theirs, God had been acquitted of any charge of unfaithfulness to his promise; though the good promised, with reference

rence to his Seed, had never been given in ; God promiseth to be a God to *Abraham's* Seed as well as to himself, yet with this condition, that he instruct and command his Seed , and that they accept of, and perform the duty ingaged to by covenant.

Fourthly , That *Ishmael's* breach of covenant did neither proceed from a failure on Gods part,in making good the Promises made to him, nor consist in his own loosing or falling from inherent Grace, but did wholly lye in his non-performance of that duty required , as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation he was admitted into with God , and transgressing those Commands he was obliged to the observation of; in brief, he fell from a Covenant-state, but not from Covenanted-grace , for that he never had an actual possession of ; so that to affirm, that *Ishmael* was in the Covenant , now established with *Abraham* and his Seed , and that that Covenant was the Covenant of Grace that Believers are still under , notwithstanding his breach of Covenant in the sence now opened, is no way inconsistent with what is affirmed concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace, we freely grant, and our Opposites must grant it too , unless they will admit of the absurdities aforementioned verse 12. that persons may be in an external Covenant-state Godward, and yet want the truth of Grace , may loose a Covenant-state, though not loose Covenanted-Grace,

Grace, or fall from a state of Grace. But not to leave any doubt, that may arise in the minds of any, about what hath been said, unsatisfied, I am aware of one Objection , and that not without a seeming weight and strength in it , will be made against what hath been said , and that is this.

Object. It will be said, Doth not the Scripture plainly intimate, if not positively assert , That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken , no not in the sense in which it is now supposed Ishmael did break it , and is not that at least one Characteristical difference between the Covenant of Grace and the first Covenant , and the peculiar excellency , in respect of which the Covenant of Grace doth excel that former Covenant ? Hath not God promised to write his Law in the inward parts , and put his fear in the hearts of all that have admission into this Covenant , as the means to prevent their breach of it ? Now it will be said, How could Ishmael , or any Child of believing Parents , supposing he was and they are in the Covenant of Grace , fail in performing the conditions of that Covenant , unless God should fail in making good these Promises , which to affirm would be blasphemy , and therefore sure, had he been and were they in the Covenant of Grace , he never had , nor they never would break Covenant , through a failing in performing the conditions of it ;

Now

Now to this I answer, That take these Promises as indefinitely laid down, so they are only made to the Church indefinitely as a collective body, and indefinite Promises, as so made, do not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person externally interested in them.

But you will say, Suppose the truth of this first Proposition, viz. That Abraham's natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins, were to be looked upon as the Subjects of this Promise, distributively taken, then every one in particular had a real and actual interest in it.

To that I answer, It is true: but consider what hath been already said; the Covenant and Promises of it were conditional, and his not performing the conditions forfeited the good promised.

But you will further say, Are not these promises, of writing the Law in the inward parts, &c. included in that grand Promise, wherein God promiseth to be a God to him and them, and consequently their performance of the condition was virtually included and implied in the Promise it self, and so the Promise did secure their performance of the condition; though the Covenant of Grace hath conditions, yet they are *Conditiones conditionatae*, conditions which are themselves promised in the Covenant; hence though the Covenant be not absolutely unconditional, yet it is equivalent thereunto, in as much as the conditions are themselves

selves included in the Promises of the Covenant; and therefore sure if they had been actually under Covenant, their performance of the conditions had been secured by this Promise.

To this I answer two things, That though these Promises do hold forth the main and principle conditions of the Covenant, as Regeneration, Faith, Repentance, and the like, and they should be included in this Promise, of Gods being a God to his people, and though they run in the external tenour of them absolutely, yet they are not absolutely absolute, as I may so speak; they have a subordinate condition, and that is, that the parties concerned in them do faithfully use the means appointed of God, in a subserviency to his working in or bestowing upon them the good promised; this is evident from *Ezek. 36. 37.* where we have the very same good, though in other terms or phrases, promised; so also in *Prov. 26.* these Promises hold forth what we of our selves cannot attain to or perform; but they suppose, and require our use of means, which, as Mr. Fanner excellently expresseth it, lye between our can and our cannot, and though it is true, a man, while in his natural estate, cannot use the means so, as shall infallibly secure the good promised to himself, yet his not using of them according to what, through the improvement of what ability, whether natural or spiritual, he hath received, he might do, will acquit God from unfaithfulness in denying the good promised.

But

But secondly, I answer, That take the Covenant as externally made and declared to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, as implying a stipulation on Gods part, and a restipulation on mans part, so these Promises of divine teachings, writing the Law in the heart, &c. are not included as essential to this Promise , of Gods being a God to them, but are distinct Promises, made indefinitely, to the Covenant-people of God ; in making good of which ; God acts according to his Sovereign will and pleasure, in a compliance with his eternal Decrees and Purposes of election and preterition, and answerably, no individual person can lay an actual claim to them, afore they are at least initially or inchoatively fulfilled ; Gods being a God to any individual person, doth require and presuppose, that they do for the present, supposing them capable, or for the future, as soon as capable, take God in Christ as their God , which that his Elect shall do, is secured by these Promises ; but that every individual person externally in Covenant, and under the Promises thereof shall do, is not secured by them. If any shall affirm, that these Promises are included , as an essential part of the good of that grand Promise of the Covenant, it concerns them to make good what they affirm, and shew how the very same Promise, at least for the substance of it , was made good to the seed of the Jews , and how it came to pass, notwithstanding that Promise ; that they never had their hearts truly circumcised to love the Lord with all their hearts , and all their souls,

as the letter of that Promise, *Deus. 30. 6.* affirms they should. Besides, let it be further noted, that the Covenant-relation established between God and the seed of believing Parents, merely by virtue of the external tenour of the Covenant, is not so full and compleat as that is, which is constituted through a Soul's personal acceptance of the Covenant, and actual ingaging with God in a Covenant-way; the Covenant in a proper and full sense must be mutual; but so it is not in the case of the Infant-seed of believing parents, their being in covenant is rather a being under a conditional Promise of the good contained in the Covenant, than being properly and compleatly in covenant with God, though in a sense God may, as he is in Scripture said to enter covenant with them, he enters covenant as he makes promise of the good of the Covenant to them, which yet he doth, as I have said, only conditionally; and the completing of the Covenant-relation between God and them, depends upon their personal acceptance of the terms proposed in it, when they come to ripeness of years.

To put a close to this first subordinate Proposition, by what hath been said, I suppose, the truth asserted in it is sufficiently evident, notwithstanding what may be objected in a way of opposition to it; and I have insisted the longer upon this, because it is the foundation to our whole Structure to be raised, in reference to the confirmation of the truth pleaded for, and the full evidencing of this, will make our way plain

to the following Propositions , in as much as *Abraham* being the first person with whom the Covenant was, at least in such a latitude, formally and expressly entered , he must needs be the rule, measure, or pattern , according to which the Covenant, in all following Ages, should be entered and continued between God and his Seed, *Primum in unoquoque genere est regula aut mensura ceterorum ejusdem generis.* God did in *Abraham* set a pattern how he would deal in relation to the tenour of his Covenant with all his Seed ; and *Abraham* being a Father of all admitted into a Covenant-relation with God. It highly concerns us , rightly to understand and know the terms and tenour of the Covenant, as made with him, in reference to us who are his Seed ; it being made with his Seed in the same tenour, and upon the same terms generically considered , as it was with him , he was the great pattern, as I have said, both of privileges and duties to his whole Seed , as will appear more fully in our second Proposition, which I now proceed to.

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## CHAP. IV.

The second subordinate Proposition laid down. How to be understood, declared. The first way of its confirmation, viz. the tenour of the Promise, as at first made to Abraham, proposed and prosecuted. Objections answered.

## Object. 2.

**S**ome object, That the Promise, wherein God engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, cannot in that latitude and extent be settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles, because that Covenant Believers are now under, is a Covenant wholly divers from that established with *Abraham*; and when the Covenants are divers, the good covenanted cannot be one and the same, at least the Subjects of the one cannot lay claim to the good of the other, by virtue of that Covenant they are under: hence a Believer, as a Believer, that is, as *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, could not lay claim to the old Covenant-promises, if not descended from *Abraham* by *Isaac* after the flesh; so a Believers fleshly seed, take it either of *Abraham*, or any other Believer, cannot lay claim to the New Covenant Promises, unless born

to the following Propositions, in as much as *Abraham*, being the first person with whom the Covenant was, at least in such a latitude, formally and expressly entered, he must needs be the rule, measure or pattern, according to which the Covenant, in all following Ages, should be entered and continued between God and his Seed. *Pri-  
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ceterorum ejusdem generis.* God did in *Abraham* set a pattern how he would deal in relation to the tenour of his Covenant with all his Seed; and *Abraham* being a Father of all admitted into a Covenant-relation with God. It highly concerns us, rightly to understand and know the terms and tenour of the Covenant, as made with him; in reference to us who are his Seed; it being made with his Seed in the same tenour, and upon the same terms generically considered, as it was with him; he was the great pattern, as I have said, both of privileges and duties to his whole Seed, as will appear more fully in our second Proposition, which I now proceed to.

## CHAP. IV.

The second subordinate Proposition laid down. How to be understood, declared.

The first way of its confirmation, viz. the tenour of the Promise, as at first made to Abraham; proposed and prosecuted.

Objections answered.

## The Second Proposition.

**T**HAT the same Promise that God made unto Abraham, with reference to himself and his natural Seed, is by God himself, and that in the same latitude and extent given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles: The Promise runs in the same tenour, both in regard of extent and limitations, to Abrahams Seed, whether natural or mystical, that it ran in to Abraham himself; it is continued to the Seed, as it was first established with their Father. Only for the preventing mistakes let it be noted, That Abraham had some prebeminency above any of his Seed, as it was meet the Father should have something of prebeminency above his Children. Abraham had a twofold prebeminency.

First, He had a preheminence in point of paternity or fatherhood; he was not only a natural Father of natural Children, as any of his Seed may be; but he was constituted a mystical Father, to all that should in after ages be admitted into the same Covenant with himself, whether Jews or Gentiles; Rom. 4. 11.

Secondly, He had a preheminency in regard of his natural Seed, Race or Posterity. He had a threefold preheminency in regard of his natural Seed.

First, In their multiplication. God never multiplied the Seed of any Believer as he multiplied the natural Seed of Abraham.

Secondly, In their segregation or separation from other people, and their incorporation together as one Nation, Body politick, or Commonwealth.

Thirdly, In Gods singling them out as the special Subjects of his Kingdom, and vouchsafing unto them his Covenant, with the benefits, priviledges, and blessings thereof, in so general and extensive a way, as he hath done, and will yet do. His Church or spiritual Kingdom, under the first Testament, consisted in a special manner of Abraham's natural Race or Posterity, and he will again take his natural Posterity, as the people who in a special manner shall

injoy the good things of the Covenant of Grace, as yet to be administered in the world : This twofold preheminency we grant that *Abraham* had above any of his Seed, whether natural or mystical : But yet take *Abraham* as a natural Father, accepting of the Covenant God made with him ; and so the same Promise, that was given unto him, is given and settled upon his whole Seed, and consequently ( which only falls under our present consideration ) is given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles. The truth of this Proposition I shall ( the Lord assisting ) evidence four wayes.

First, From the tenour of the Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, at the first establishment of the Covenant between God and him; and here we must have recourse to what hath been already said, for the explication of this Promise. The sum of all is this ; That when God promised *Abraham* to be a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, his meaning was, that he would be a God both to *Abraham* and his wholt Seed ; as before explained in their respective generations ; that is, to them and their respective Children, descending immediately from their own loins ; yet so, as that their interest in the Promise, and enjoyment of the good promised, should be continued and vouchsafed unto them upon condition of their walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their Father *Abraham* ; and consequently, that the Promise did not actually appertain either

ther to any of Abraham's natural Race or posterity, beyond his Children immediately descending from him, or to any of his Seeds, Races, or Posterities, beyond their immediate Children, included with them in that phrase, *their Generations*, by virtue of that their remote relation unto them. Now then all that I have to do for the proving the settlement of this Promise, in the same extent and latitude upon believing Gentiles, in which it was given to Abraham himself, by the tenour of the Promises as now made to Abraham, is to prove, that this is the true sense and meaning of this Promise, as made to him with reference to his natural Seed, for look as the Promise was to be understood as referring to his natural Seed, so it is to be understood as referring to his mystical Seed, in as much as both are equally and alike intended in the Promise, as at first made unto Abraham, both his natural and mystical Seed standing in one and the same capacity respective to the Promise, and therefore as it ought to be interpreted as it had reference to the one, so it ought to be interpreted as referring to the other. Now that this Promise, as referring to Abraham's natural Seed, was to be interpreted and understood in the extent and latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed, I shall make good by these two or three Arguments.

First, That must needs be the true sense and meaning of this Promise, which alone is consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God

in performing it : But that sence and meaning, which is given according to the extent and limitations afore expressed, is only consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it : Therefore that sence and meaning must be the alone true and genuine sence and meaning of it , and answerably is so to be interpreted and understood by us. That we ought to interpret and understand the Promises of God in such a sence and meaning, as is consistent with his truth and faithfulness in performing them , and when there is but one sence and meaning consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God , that that must be the alone true sence and meaning, sure none will deny. God is a true and faithful God , a God that cannot lye, not only will not, but cannot lye ; therefore that sence and meaning put upon his Promises , which is consistent with his truth and faithfulness in performing them , cannot possibly be the true sence and meaning of them. Now that the sence and meaning put upon this Promise , according to the extent and latitude, and with the limitations before expressed, is alone consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it, will be evident, by shewing the inconsistency of any other sence and meaning possibly to be put upon it , with the truth and faithfulness of God in performing it. And for this let us a little inquire what other sence and meaning can possibly be put upon this Promise, and I suppose the only sence and meaning that will be attempted to be put upon it , will be this , viz.

That

That when God promised to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, to be a God unto them in their generations, his meaning was only this; That he would be a God to each of them in their respective ages or generations wherein they should lives; and so by this phrase, *In their generations*, we are to understand only each particular or individual person of *Abraham's* Seed, as subsisting in their respective ages or generations, and not as including Parents and Children.

Now let us a little pursue this sense and meaning, and see whether it be consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises. And here let it be remembred, that *Abraham's* natural Seed must necessarily be primarily intended in this Promise, as the first and immediate Subjects of it; this hath been already proved, and therefore I shall take it for granted at present. And it must further be considered, that though *Abraham's* natural Seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, were firstly intended, as the primary Subjects of this Promise; yet it had a further respect, viz. to his whole natural Race and Posterity, as immediately descending from him, in succeeding ages; this is evident, as from other Scriptures, so from this very phrase, *their generations*; and besides, the whole Context evidently declares it. In Gen. 15:16. it evidently appears, that God intended not, that *Abraham's* Seed should possess the Land of *Canaan* till the fourth generation; yet it is promised to the Seed intended

in this Promise, that they should have the Land of Canaan, and that for an everlasting possession : So that when God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, though he intended his own immediate Children , yet he had a further respect to his natural Race and Posterity, as immediately descending from him.

Now let it be considered , how it was consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises, to promise to *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and his Seed, both immediately, and mediately descending from him, seeing it is certain he was not a God to all his Seed, no not so much as in an external and outward way ; for when *Ishmael* was cast out of *Abraham's* Family, and together therewith, or thereby, out of the Covenant, God ceased to be a God to any of his Race or Posterity, unless by their personal acceptance of the Covenant, they became again incorporated into the Church of the Jews , as any other Heathen might be : and the like is true of *Esau's* Race and Posterity ; so for the whole body of the Jewish Nation at this day, there is a cessation of any actual Covenant relation between God and them . Now how could God cast off so great a part of *Abraham's* Seed from being his people , and how could he cease to be a God to them, and yet remain faithful to his Promise, in case this be the sense and meaning of it ? Yes, it may be some will say, the truth and faithfulness of God may be vindicated two ways,

First, It may be vindicated by the consideration of the nature of this Promise: It was, as you your selves grant, an indefinite Promise made to *Abraham's Seed* collectively taken, and so was verified, in the performance of it to some of his Seed, though it was not performed universally, to every individual person of his Seed.

But to this I reply two things.

First, That this Promise, according to the sense and meaning contended for by my Opposers, cannot be an indefinite Promise to *Abraham's Seed*, collectively taken, but must needs be a definite Promise to his Seed, distributively taken; for that is the sense and meaning contended for, That God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and each of his Seed in their respective ages or generations. Now, according to this sense, this term *Seed*, must needs be taken distributively, as meant of every one of *Abraham's Seed*: So that whenever, in any generation, *Abraham* had one born unto him, as one of his Seed, the Promise did reach and take in him, or her, as so born unto him, as one of the Subjects intended in it. If it had been only said to *Abraham*, to thee and to thy Seed, it might have been an indefinite Promise to his Seed, collectively taken; but when 'tis added, in their generations, according to this sense it must needs be a definite Promise made to his Seed, distributively or singularly taken; and consequently, Gods not being a God unto any

of

of his Seed, had been a breach of this Promise, as made unto *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Secondly, I answer; Though the Promise were an indefinite Promise made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken; yet none ever did, or ever should fail of enjoying the good promised; supposing there had been no failure in performing the condition of it, either by the parties themselves, or by their next or remote Progenitors.

Secondly, It may be it will be said; The Promise was made conditionally, and *Abraham's* Seed failing in the performance of the conditions, disengaged God from making good the Promise to them.

To that I reply; That it is readily granted, that this Covenant, and the Promises thereof, was made to *Abraham* and his Seed conditionally: But observe it; according to the sense and meaning pleaded for by our Opposers, every Child of any Jew, or of any of *Abraham's* posterity, must be in the eye of this Promise accounted as one of *Abraham's* Seed, and as so related unto him, be intended in it as one of the Subjects of it; And how can a Child forfeit its right to a Promise before it is born? So that suppose that the immediate Father had failed in the condition of the Promise, and thereby deprived himself of an interest in it, yet he could not

not forfeit the Childs right, in as much as if this sense were true, the Child received not its right from the next Parent, but from *Abraham* himself, one of whose Seed this Child is; and hence it will unavoidably follow, that either the whole Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, at least in their infancy, before an actual forfeiture made by themselves, must be under this Promise, and consequently in a Covenant-relation with God, or else God hath failed in making good his Promise; neither of which those that contend for this sense will affirm; therefore this sense and meaning must unavoidably be relinquished, and there being no other sense and meaning imaginable, we must necessarily adhere to that aforesaid. And indeed should we not understand this Promise in the extent and latitude, and with those limitations before expressed; one of those absurdities will necessarily follow; for if so be we should understand it of all *Abraham's* natural Seed, universally, both immediately and mediately descending from him, God must either be their God, or fail in his Promise, they receiving their right to, and interest in the promises, not from their immediate parents, as included with them in that phrase, *their generations*, but from *Abraham* himself; which right and interest they could not loose by the sin of any intermediate parent, they being notwithstanding the sin of such a parent, still *Abraham's* Seed. And it being impossible, that they themselves, afore they are born, should forfeit their own right to it; and if we should grant, that parents and children

children were included in that phrase, their generations, and not limit the promise to particular generations of Abraham's Seed, that is, to parents and their immediate children, the same absurdity will follow; for then the Seed of the Jews, who in their own persons forfeited their own right, would yet have a right to it, by virtue of the promise, as made to their progenitors in one or more generations past; and it so be the natural Seed of Abraham should convey a right to the promise, merely as such, viz. as Abraham's natural Seed, without consideration had to their own abiding in Covenant, still the same absurdities will follow; either the Infant-seed of the Jews must still be under the promise, or God is not faithful to his promises, neither of which will be affirmed (as I judge) by our Opposers. Now then this being the true sense and meaning of this promise, the truth pleaded for is past all question evident, viz. That as God promised Abraham, with reference to his natural Seed, immediately descending from him, that he would be a God to him, and them in their generations; so with reference to his mystical Seed, viz. Believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to him and them in their generations, the promise being made to Abraham's whole Seed, whether natural or mystical, that God would be a God to them in their generations; and surely believing Gentiles are Abraham's Seed, as well as his Children proceeding from his own loins, as shall be evidenced more fully by and by. But that is the first Argument,

menty to prove that the sence and meaning given, according to the extent, and latitude, and the limitations afore expressed, is the true and genuine sence and meaning of this promise.

- Argum. 12. My second Argument is this, God in his consequent transactions and dealings with the Seed of Abraham, in reference to covenant-engagements between him and them, hath expounded that Promise, according to the sence and meaning before given; then that must needs be the true sence and meaning of it: but the former is true, therefore the latter. Sure if the after dealings of God with the Seed of Abraham do declare the sence and meaning of that Promise to be as we have afore given it, we need not doubt but 'tis the true and genuine sence and meaning of it; we cannot doubt but that God fully understands his own sence and meaning in that, as well as in all other his promises; we may well interpret promises as God himself doth, whether he do it in his Word or by his Works. Now that God hath expounded this promise, according to the sence and meaning before given, is evident from that of Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. For observe it, when God deals with Abraham's Seed, in reference unto Covenant engagements between him and them, he takes in not only Parents, but their Infant-Seed with them, and that as the accomplishment of this very promise. God now enters Covenant with the whole Congregation, in that extent

extent and latitude that he promised to *Abraham*, that he would be a God to his Seed in their generations, including Parents and Children; he did not only enter Covenant with the Parents, as he had before promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, but he enters Covenant with their Children: that is, he enters Covenant with them in their generations; and his entering Covenant with these Children or Infants, could not be, as they were, of the natural Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, for the Reasons before given; for if that promise engaged God to enter Covenant with, or extend his Covenant to the Infants of these particular Parents, upon the account of their relation to *Abraham*, as of his Seed, there would be the same reason of continuing this Covenant-relation between himself and all *Abraham's* natural Race and Posterity, while in their infancy, which he hath not done; and therefore he must needs take them now in upon the account of their immediate parents, by virtue of this promise, wherein he engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations: Besides, he enters Covenant not only with the natural Seed of *Abraham*, but with the Strangers then amongst them, and with their Seed, the Children of Strangers being still admitted into Covenant together with their parents: So that the manner of his now entering covenant with these particular Parents and Children at this time, as a clear and express explication of that phrase, wherein the promise was first made to

to Abraham, with reference to his Seed, viz. That God would be a God to them in their generation. And as the Covenant was entered in this extent and latitude, in which the promise was at first made, so with the same limitations, as is evident from the Commination denounced against him that should apostatize to Idolatry, compare the twentieth with Chapter the thirteenth, verse the twelfth and thirteenth; The Seed of Idolaters was to be destroyed with the parents themselves, which could not have been, in case the promise had extended beyond the immediate Children: so that we have God himself expounding the true sense and meaning of this promise, and thus he expounds it in the latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed.

**Argum. 3.** My third Argument is this. If the Prophets have interpreted this promise as to be fulfilled in Gospel times, in the extent and latitude before expressed, then we are so to interpret and understand it: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

But this will bring me to the second way proposed, for the evidencing of this our second Proposition, and therefore I shall not stay upon it at present.

From what hath been said it evidently appears, that this promise of the Covenant is to be understood according to the extent and latitude, and yet with the limitations before given: This promise was made to Abraham's whole Seed,

Seed, and answerably to his mystical Seed, believing Gentiles, as well as to his natural Seed : Here is no limitation of the promise to either sort or species of *Abraham's* Seed ; 'tis no more limited to his natural than to his mystical Seed, nor to his mystical than to his natural, but is made alike to both sorts of Seed, whoever bear this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, they are the Subjects intended in this promise, or they are under this promise, That God will be a God to them in their generations : Every believing Gentile stands related to *Abraham*, and answerably is to be looked upon in the same capacity, with reference to this promise, as *Isaac* did ; though the foundation of the relation be different ; yet the relation it self is one and the same, and the capacity of both, with reference to the Promise, alike, that we may say as the Apostle to something a different purpose, *We Brethren are as Isaac was*, we stand alike related to *Abraham*, as he did, and are the joyn Subjects of the promise with him : so that as God promised to *Abraham*, with reference unto him, that we would be a God to him in his generation, so he promised to *Abraham*, with reference to us believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to us in our generations ; that phrase including, as then so still, Parents and Children : and that which gives further evidence to this truth is, that *Abraham's* natural Seed, as grown up, held their own interest, and conveyed an actual right to, and interest, in the promise, to their Children not as they were *Abraham's* natural Seed them selves,

selves, but as they were his mystical Seed (that is) did walk in the steps of his faith and obedience. Now let any man shew any reason why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to Abraham's natural Seed, especially they, as grown up, inheriting the promise themselves, and conveying a right to it to their Children, as his mystical Seed, and not as his natural; I say, let any man shew any solid reason, why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to them, and why the Gentiles should not enjoy it in the same extent and latitude that they did, seeing that God hath promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his whole Seed in their generations; certainly no rational ground can be given, and therefore we may positively conclude, that this promise, in the full latitude and extent of it, is given and confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the very first making of it unto *Abraham*.

## CHAP. V.

The second way of the foregoing Propositions confirmation proposed and prosecuted; where it is proved, that by the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament, relating to new Testament times, the good contained in this Promise is settled upon, and confirmed to, some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and that it is no way restrained unto these immediately and directly concerned in these Promises and Prophesies, and consequently must needs be common to all under the same Covenant. The third way of the same Propositions confirmation, where it is proved, that the good contained in the forementioned Promise is, by the express letter of the new Testament, settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles; the Scripture wherein that settlement is made produced: Objections of the said settlement answered.

**S**econdly, The truth of this our second Proposition is further evident from the Promises and

and Prophesies of the old Testament ; and thus the good contained in this Promise made to Abraham is, in the extent and latitude before express, given and confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, by the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament, referring and relating to new Testament times : And thus we argue, What good is by promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, is by the same promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon all under the same Covenant, unless it be restrained to that some either by the nature and quality of the good it self, or by some express revelation of the will of God ; but this good, viz. To have God a God to them and their Infant-seed, is by promise and prophesie given to, and settled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and is not restrained to that some, either by the nature of the good it self, or by any express revelation of the will of God ; therefore that good must needs by the same Prophesies and Promises be given to, and settled upon all under the same Covenant.

The Major proposition cannot be denied, without utterly razing the foundation of the faith and comfort of all believers. For what is the foundation of the faith and comfort of each particular Believer but this, That what good is promised to any particular Believers, and no wayes restrained to those in particular to whom the Promise was first made, is promised to all that are under the same Covenant with them ;

and thus the Apostle directs us to apply Promises made to particular Believers, yea, when there might seem to be some shew of reason to restrain the good promised to those in particular to whom it was immediately made ; the Apostle applying that Promise made to *Joshua*, concerning Gods never leaving nor forsaking him, to the *Hebrews*, is our sufficient direction in this matter.

For the Minor proposition, that only can be questioned ; for the proof of which I shall, the Lord assisting, do these three things.

First, Instance in, and assign the persons, who in new Testament times have by the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament this good given to, and settled upon them.

Secondly, I shall prove, that 'tis one and the same Covenant of Grace that they are under, as having this good given unto them, and that believing Gentiles in general are under.

Thirdly, That this good is not restrained to them in particular, to whom it is by promise and prophesie given, either of these wayes before mentioned, and consequently not at all.

For the first, And thus I need do no more, but produce such old Testament Promises and Prophesies, as by which this good, of having God a God to them and their Infant-seed, is given to, and settled upon some under the Covenant

nant of Grace in new Testament times : The persons , or that sort or species of persons intended in them, is sufficiently evident from these Promises and Prophesies themselves. Look into these Scriptures , *Isai.* 59. 21. and 65. 25. and 44. 3. 4. *Jer.* 3. 12. *Ezek.* 37. 21. and 22. and compare all these places with *Rom.* 11. 26. That all these Promises and Prophesies refer to the Jews, as yet to be called and brought home unto Christ , will not be denyed by any. And this good, viz. To have God to be a God to them, and their Infant-seed with them, is given to, and settled upon them by these Promises and Prophesies , is sure past all rational doubt : If all these Promises and Prophesies , concerning Gods pouring his Spirit upon them and their Seed ; concerning his continuing his Word and Spirit in their mouths , from one generation to another; concerning his being a God to all their families , not only of their persons , but families ; concerning their Children being as aforetime , and the like ; especially the Apostle expounding all these Promises and Prophesies by that universal phrase, *All Israel* , do not sufficiently assure the Jews , that when they are brought home unto Christ , they shall enjoy this good in the latitude and extent express , I see not how we can possibly be sure of any thing held forth by way of promise and prophesie , yea, or how we can be assur'd of any thing past, that is declar'd to us by Scripture-history. Certainly we must wholly despair of understanding any thing God speaks to us in his

Word; if we doubt whether the forementioned Promises and Prophesies do assure the Jews of that forementioned good. Therefore we may positively conclude, having such an abundant, yea, superabundant evidence from Scripture for it, that the Jews, when the veil is taken off from their hearts, and they that turned to the Lord shall enjoy this good, in the same latitude and extent that their Father *Abraham* did.

Secondly, That it is one and the same Covenant into which the Jews (the persons to whom this good is by these Promises and Prophesies given) shall be received, and believing Gentiles in generations are under; this is evident, past all rational contradiction, by comparing *Jer. 31, 31.* with *Hebr. 8 8.* We plainly see, that the Apostle takes it for granted, that the Covenant that God promises to make with the Jews at their future calling and conversion, is the Covenant now made with believing Gentiles; so that though some, though groundlessly, suppose, that Covenant made with *Abraham* was not the same with that believing Gentiles are now under: yet none can pretend, that the Covenant under which believing Gentiles are, and that to be made with the Jews, at the time forementioned, are different or distinct Covenants. Suppose the Apostle tell us, that God made another Covenant with Believers than that he made with *Israel* of old (then that he made with *Abraham* it is no where said) yet they cannot

cannot say there is the least intimation that God will make another Covenant with the Jews, different from that we are now under. Now then the Covenant being one and the same, the promises of that Covenant are indifferently to be applyed unto all under it : And for the further confirmation of this, let it be observed, that the Apostle doth frequently apply these promises, which are to have their full accomplishment to the Jews, to the Gospel Church under this present administration : compare *Isai.* 54. 1. with *Gal.* 4. 27. That promise in the letter directly respects the Jews, yet the Apostle applyes it, as fulfilled inchoatively, in the conversion of the Gentiles : So compare *Hosea* 1, 11. and 2. 23. with *Rom.* 9. 25, 26. So once again, compare *Amos* 9. 11. with *Acts* 15. 26. So that it is evident, that the Covenant, then to be made with, or into which the Jews shall be received, is the very same with that now made with believing Gentiles, and answerably those promises, that shall have their full accomplishment to the Jews, are applicable to believing Gentiles.

Thirdly, That this good, of having God a God to Parents and their Infant-seed, is not restrained to the Jews, by either of the wayes before mentioned, and consequently not at all : Who can imagine that believing Gentiles should be less capable of enjoying this good, than the Jews will be at their conversion? Why may not God be a God to Believers and their Seed now,

as well as to Believers and their Seed hereafter ? Why may not God be a God to a believing Gentile and his Seed , as well as to a believing Jew and his Seed ? Can any prove , that believing Gentiles are absolutely incapable of enjoying this good, in the full latitude and extent of it ? They will say something to the invalidating of this Argument : Suppose it should be granted ( which yet I see no reason for ) that the Seed of the Jews will be more capable of being the Subjects of the Covenant and promise thereof , than the Seed of Believers now are ; yet unless they prove , that the Seed of Believers are absolutely incapable of being received into, as joyn Subjects with their parents of the Covenant, and promise thereof, they say nothing to the purpose ; in as much as whatever difference, in point of capability or incapability, may be assigned between the Seed of Believers then, and the Seed of Believers now , in regard of the different manner of this and that administration , yet that is no reason why we may not apply these promises to believing Gentiles, to have their first accomplishment in and among them , according to the manner of this present administration , as well as the Jews may apply them to themselves , and enjoy the accomplishment of them in a way suitable to that more excellent and glorious administration : and as for the other way of Gods restraining the good of promises to some particular persons , viz. by the express revelation of his will , let any such revelation of the will of God , in the matter under

under consideration, be produced, and I shall put an end to this controversie ; and unless this good, in the extent and latitude before express, be some way restrained to the Jews, we may positively conclude, that the promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed , is by the forementioned promises and prophesies confirmed to , and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the full latitude and extent in which it was given unto *Abraham*, viz. That God will be a God to them in their generations, that is, to them and their Seed. We may lay down this general rule , That whatever Promises or Prophesies are given out by the Prophets in the old Testament, directly referring and relating to the Jews at their call and conversion, yet unless the good contained in them be some way restrained to them in particular, we may and ought to apply them to the new Testament Church , and the particular members of it, under this present administration. The application made by the Apostle of Promises and Prophesies directly referring unto them, to the new Testament Church, and the particular Members thereof is a sufficient warrant for our so doing. As now for instance take that promise, *Amos* 9. 11. concerning the building up the Tabernacle of *David*, in the letter of it, it hath a direct reference to the future conversion of the Jews , yet we see, *Acts* 15 16. the Apostle applyes it to the erecting and building up of the Gospel Church among the Gentiles. Now the Prophet *Jeremiah* tells us, how God will build up this Tabernacle

bernacle of *David*, of and among the Jews, he will do it, by taking in their respective families, which must needs take in Parents and Children into Covenant with himself, *He will be a God to all the families of the house of Israel.* Now let any rational account be given, why we may not apply that promise in *Jeremiah*, expressing the manner of Gods raising up this tabernacle, to his raising it up from among the Gentiles, as well as the Apostle applies that promise it self to the gathering the Church from among them; doubtless no reason, that hath so much as a probable shew of reason or truth in it, can be given.

And whereas it may be said, there are some things spoken in *Jeremiah* 31. which cannot be applied to believing Gentiles.

To that I answer, 'Tis granted: But that hinders not at all, but that what is applicable to them, may and ought to be applied unto them, in that promise, concerning the building up of the Tabernacle of *David*; as it refers to the conversion of the Jews, there is something which is not applicable to the Gentiles: yet that hinders not, but that the promise, so far as applicable to them, was intended of them, and accomplished in the beginning of it, in their conversion: So now God, as being the God of all the families of *Israel*, will, when the Jewish Church cometh up to the fulness of her glory, communicate himself in a more full, glorious, and universal manner, in respect of the individual Members of each family, than now he doth;

doth; yet that hinders not at all, but that that promise was intended of the families of *Israel*, as gathered from among the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls the Gentile Church, *the Israel of God*, and is begun to be accomplished, according to the true intent of it, under this present administration. But that's for the second way of evidencing the truth of this our second Proposition.

Thirdly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be evidenced from the express letter of the new Testament, this promise made to *Abraham*, and that in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to him, is confirmed to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, by the express letter of the new Testament. Thus in *Galatians 3. 13, 14*. Christ, saith the Apostle, hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of *Abraham* might come on the Gentiles, through *Jesus Christ*, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through faith. The Apostle we see here doth positively affirm, that the very end of Christ, redeeming the Gentiles from the curse of the Law, was their possessing *Abraham's blessing*; and consequently is the immediate issue and result of a Gentiles redemption or deliverance from the curse of the Law, through Christ, as believed in. No sooner is a believing Gentile freed from the curse of the Law, by his faith in Christ, but he, as one of *Abraham's Seed*, hath *Abraham's blessing* come upon him. For the

the clearing up the evidence given in to the truth of our foregoing Proposition, by this Scripture I shall do these two things,

First, I shall prove, that this blessing of *Abraham*, said to be come upon believing Gentiles, is that very good contained in that promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, and remove what Objections may be made to the contrary.

Secondly, I shall prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles, through Christ, in the same latitude and extent that it was given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him.

For the first, viz. That this blessing came upon the Gentiles through Christ, is the good contained in the aforementioned promise: This is evident from the Context.

First, From verse 16. where sayes the Apostle, Now unto Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he said not, unto Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Christ: This verse 16. is added for the confirmation of what the Apostle had asserted in verse 14. For the clearing up of this we must observe, that by the promise of the Spirit, in the latter clause of that verse 14. and the blessing of *Abraham*, in the former clause of this verfe, one and the same good is intended. 'Tis true, Beza conceives two distinct

distinct blessings are intended, and therefore he adds that Copulative, καὶ ἡ, and takes that phrase, *The promise of the Spirit*, by an Hebraism, for the Spirit promised ; but that cannot be, for then, as Pareus observes, it should not have been, τὸ ἐπαγγελτὸν τῆς προμηθείας, the promise of the Spirit, as it is, but τὸ προμέμενον τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, the Spirit of promise : and therefore by the promise of the Spirit we must understand, either that spiritual promise, so Pareus, or rather that promise which God by his Spirit gave unto *Abraham*, and which by the inspiration of the Spirit is left upon record in the Scripture, and that is the promise containing the blessing before mentioned ; or if any should understand it of the Spirit himself, taking it of his in-dwelling presence, they shall not be gainsaid by me. And the meaning is this, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, that we, whether Jews or Gentiles, might receive the promise of the Spirit, (viz. that blessing promised to *Abraham* by the Spirit) through faith in Christ, that is, that being united by faith unto Christ, and incorporated into him, as members of his mystical body, we might receive that blessing promised to *Abraham*, and now come upon the Gentiles through Christ : So that that which the Apostle asserts in this ver. 14. is this, that the blessing promised to *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, through their incorporation into Christ by faith ; and this the Apostle proves in verse 16. by the tenour of the promise wherein the blessing aforementioned is contained ; The tenour

nour of the promise is this, not, I will be a God to thee and thy Seeds, but to thee and thy Seed, as intending only one species or kind of Seed, which the Apostle expounds to be Christ, that is, Christ mystical. Now observe it, the Apostles urging the tenour of the promise, to prove that the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, as he had afore affirmed it to be, in verse 14. evidently declares, he must needs intend the blessing contained in that promise; if he had intended it of any other blessing than that good given to *Abraham* and his Seed by that promise, the tenour of that promise had not prov'd what he was to prove: so that it must needs be that blessing promised to *Abraham*, that the Apostle here affirms to be come upon believing Gentiles through Jesus Christ. Now that this promise, by the tenour of which the Apostle prov'd what he had said, verse 14. is this very promise made to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 7. is evident past all doubt, in as much as the Apostle must needs refer to some promise made to *Abraham* and his Seed in that very phrase, *To thee and thy Seed*; the strength of the Apostles Argument lying in the manner of expression, *to thy Seed*. Now we have no other promise containing a good competable to the Gentiles, express in that phrase but this only; so that it is evident, that this blessing, said to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that blessing contained in that very promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations. As for that promise in Gen. 12. 3. there is no mention

mention at all of *Abraham's Seed*; and for that Gen. 17. 19. unto which some seem to suppose the Apostle here hath reference, there is no mention at all of *Abraham's Seed*, as such, but of *Isaac's*; and besides, 'tis not said to thy Seed, but it is spoken of or concerning his Seed: But now, I say, the Apostle must needs refer to, and intend some promise, wherein this very phrase, *to thy Seed*, is expressly used: The strength of this Argument, as I have said, lying in the manner of expression, there being a mystery in that phrase, implying that the blessing of *Abraham* should not be enjoyed by all that might lay claim to this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, but by his Seed which were of the faith, as the Apostle explains it, Rom. 4: 13.

Secondly, That the blessing said to be come come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant, is evident from verse 29. where saith the Apostle, *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to promise: Heirs of what?* Why verse 14. tells us, of the blessing of *Abraham*: But heirs according to what promise? Why verse 16. tells us, that promise made to the Seed of *Abraham*: Now how could they be heirs of that blessing, according to, or by virtue of that promise, unless the blessing they were heirs unto, were the blessing or good contained in that promise? Can any be heirs to a blessing, according to or by virtue of that promise, in which that blessing is not contained?

Or

Or can a promise convey a right to that good which is not contained in it? who can imagine it? Therefore doubtless the blessing must needs be the blessing, contained in that promise made to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations.

Thirdly, That the blessing of *Abraham* said to be come upon believing Gentiles through Christ, is the blessing contained in that promise, is evident from verse 9, where it is said, they that are of the faith are blessed, *οὐτοὶ τοῖς Ιακώβῳ* *Ἄβραμῷ*, with faithful *Abraham*, that is, blessed with the same blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with: Now there is no blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with, that can possibly come upon the Gentiles, but only the blessing contained in this promise, and therefore that must needs be the blessing here intended.

But three things will be objected against our taking this Scripture as an express settlement of *Abraham's* blessing, as it consisted in that promise, of God being a God to him and his Seed, upon believing Gentiles.

First, It will be objected, That this blessing is not meant of that blessing with which *Abraham* himself was blessed, but of that blessing promised to him, with reference to his Seed, which was, that God would be a God to them, as he was to *Abraham* himself.

To this I answer:—It is all one; whether we understand it of the blessing promised to *Abraham*, with reference to himself, or with reference to his Seed, in as much as the Promise made to *Abraham* himself, and that made to him with reference to his Seed, is one and the same: What God promised to *Abraham*, viz. That he would be a God to him and his natural Seed, that he promised to his Seed, viz. to be a God to them in their generations; that is, as before explained, to them and their Seed; and besides, taking it so, the promise to *Abraham's* natural Seed was, to them in their generations. And in like manner, as the Apostle here affirms, it runs to believing Gentiles, viz. to them in their generations, including Parents and Children: But if we compare this phrase, *in iustitia tuā Ācegā*, the blessing of *Abraham*, with verse 9. it is evident, it was the blessing wherewith *Abraham* himself was blessed; the blessing of *Abraham*, according to the propriety of the phrase, properly signifies the blessing that *Abraham* himself enjoy'd; and to be blessed with *Abraham*, to enjoy his blessing, and to inherit the good promised to him, with reference to his Seed, intends, in the language and disputation of the Apostle, one and the same thing; an undeniable evidence, that the promise, as made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, contained the very same good it contained as made to *Abraham* himself, the Father of that Seed. Now to him it was, to him and his Seed, that is, his natural Seed; and therefore it is the same to his Seed,

to them and their natural Seed, for which is all one, to them in their generations.

Secondly, It will be objected, That this blessing is not meant of a relative good, consisting in a Covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but is meant of these spiritual blessings of Reconciliation, Justification, Adoption, and Eternal Life vouchsafed to *Abraham*, as personally considered; and 'tis granted, that *Abraham's* blessing, consisting of these spiritual blessings, is come upon believing Gentiles, through Christ: But what is this to that promise made to *Abraham*, concerning Gods being a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, constituting an external Covenant-relation between God and them.

To this I answer, This Objection will be obviated by the second thing proposed, for the clearing up of the settlement made of *Abraham's* blessing upon believing Gentiles, by the express letter of this Scripture: and therefore I shall only say thus much at present, that it is granted; the spiritual benefits or blessings now mentioned, were included in this blessing, said here to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, yet not exclusive of that relative good of a Covenant-state and relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but that is the first and primary good intended, and that which is the foundation of all the rest, and in which they are all virtually included.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It will be further objected , That the blessing here said to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is not that blessing where-with *Abraham* himself was blessed , but that blessing promised to the Nations in him , and consequently the Apostle intends not the blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant , mentioned in that Gen. 17. 7. but that blessing spoken of Gen. 12. 3. where God Promises unto *Abraham* , that *in him all the Nations of the earth should be blessed*: and that the Apostle intends it of that blehng contained in that promise , and not of that blessing contained in that Gen. 17. appears from verse the eighth of this third of *Galatians*,

To this I answer two things.

First, That though I freely grant , that this blessing , said by our Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles , be that blessing with which twas promised to *Abraham*, That the Nations should be blessed in him , yet it will not follow , that it is not the blessing or good contained in that grand promise of the Covenant , yea, that it is the blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant, is abundantly proved from what hath been already spoken. And therefore,

Secondly, I answer, That that blessing, with which God promised so to bless the Nations in *Abraham* , is the same blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant ; and therefore

the Apostle might have, and certainly hath reference to both these promises in this Chapter. For the clearing up of this, let it be observed, that there are three things considerable in this blessing promised to *Abraham*, with reference to the Nations of the Earth.

First, There is the matter of this blessing, and that is summarily, their having and enjoying God, as a God unto them and theirs.

Secondly, There are the means of their enjoying that blessing, and these are either chief and principal, viz. Christ as removing the curse of the Law, and purchasing that blessing for them by his death and suffering. 2. The subordinate and less principal, viz. *Abraham* himself.

Thirdly, There is the notion or consideration under which they should receive and enjoy this blessing, and that is, as *Abraham's Seed*.

Now in that Gen. 12. 3. we have a more general promise of this blessing, with which God intended to bless the Nations, and also a specification of the means, both supremum and principal, and also subordinate and less principal, of their coming to the enjoyment of it; they should be blessed in *Abraham*, that is, in *Abraham* himself, as the less principal means; in Christ, the Seed of *Abraham*, as the chief and principal means.

But in this Gen. 17. 7. we have both the matter of the blessing afore promised, and the notion under which they should receive and enjoy it; *I will be, saith God, a God to thee and thy Seed after thee in their generations.* The notion under which God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, is, as they were his Seed; the matter of the blessing is, that God would be a God to them in their generations; that is, to them and theirs. So that these two Promises, Gen. 12. 3. and Gen. 17. 7. are not two distinct Promises, containing two distinct blessings, but they contain one and the same blessing, and, as taken jointly together, declare the full mind of God concerning his blessing the Nations of the Earth in *Abraham*. The sum of all comes to thus much, That God would make *Abraham* as a Father of natural Children, from among whom the Messiah should come; so a spiritual or mystical Father, and answerably would, through the interposal of that one principal Member of his Seed, viz. Christ, be a God to him and his Seed, both natural and mystical, in their generations; and consequently all the Nations of the Earth, whether of *Abraham's* natural Race or Posterity, or of the Gentiles, that were designed to be blessed, should be blessed in *Abraham*, as his Seed, or in him, as a common Father to them all: *And in his Seed, viz. Christ,* as the procuring cause of that their blessedness: Hence it is no wonder, though the Apostle, in speaking of the way of the blessings coming upon the Gentiles, hath reference to both these

promises, both, as I said, taken together, and in conjunction one with the other , containing the full mind of God , concerning his blessing the world : As a close of all let me add , that as God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, as before opened , so he made *Abraham* himself a copy or pattern, according unto which he promised to bless them in him, and that both in respect of the blessing it self, with which he would bless them, and in respect of the terms and manner of their possessing and inheriting that blessing, viz. Through faith in Christ, expressing it self in universal obedience.

For the further proof of this, let it be observed, that both the Hebrew prefix and the Greek preposition we translate in, may be translated after the manner , or according to: For the Greek, see *Hebr. 4.11.* whence *Calvin* gives the sense thus, *Non tantum significat ipsum fore exemplar, sed causam benedictionis.* *Junius* and *Tremelius* give this gloss, *Familiae terræ tibi insitæ per fidem, participes sunt harum promissionum benedictionumque tuarum:* And thus the Apostle expounds this promise, of being blessed in *Abraham*, by another phrase, blessed with *Abraham*. Now then having proved, that this blessing, said by the Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that very blessing or good contained in that grand Promise of the Covenant , and that not only in that branch of it that refers to *Abraham's Seed*, but in that branch referring directly unto *Abraham* himself, wherein God ingaged to be a God to him and

and his Seed ; and consequently that this is the blessing said to be come upon the Gentiles ; or

I come now to the second thing proposed, viz. to prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles, in the same extent, and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham* himself : Now this is sufficiently evident from the alone consideration of the indefiniteness and universality of the expression, the blessing of *Abraham* ; we see the Apostle affirms, the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, without any restriction or limitation, he doth not say, this or that part of the blessing, but the blessing absolutely and unlimitedly.

It is true, notwithstanding the indefiniteness and universality of the Apostles expression, yet in case any part of the blessing vouchsafed to *Abraham* be of that nature, as that the Gentiles are simply and absolutely incapable of it, or in case God himself hath any where else withheld any part of it from them, in this case a limitation and restriction must be understood, as necessarily implied in this general and universal expression ; but otherwise we ought to understand the Apostle, according to the full latitude of his expression, the blessing, that is, the whole blessing of *Abraham* is come upon believing Gentiles.

And hence we argue : If the whole blessing of *Abraham* be come upon believing Gentiles, so far as they are capable of enjoying it, and God hath by no express revelation of his will withheld

held it from them, and this, to have God a God to him and his natural Seed , was an essential part of his blessing , which believing Gentiles are capable of injoying, and God hath not by any revelation of his will withheld from them; then this part of his blessing is come upon them in the same extent and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham*: But the former is true, therefore the latter.

It's true , If any man can make it appear, that this part of *Abraham's* blessing, viz. Gods ingaging to be a God to his Seed with him, be a blessing the Gentiles are incapable of injoying ; or that God by any express revelation of his will, hath withheld that part of the blessing from them, we shall cease any further claim to it.

But as for the first, The incapacity of believing Gentiles to enjoy this part of *Abraham's* blessing, sure none can pretend it ; for suppose it should be granted ( which is not ) that believers under this present dispensation are not in a like capacity to injoy this good, that Saints in future times will be ; or that their Seed are not alike capable of that good the Seed of Believers in those times will be capable of : Yet none can say, that either believers, or their Seed, are incapable of what *Abraham* and his natural Seed were capable of : 'tis strange how it is possible for any man to conceit such a difference, either in the capacity of Parents or Children, or in the dispensation of God , that Believers under this present dispensation should be wholly

ly deprived of that part of the blessing, which Believers formerly enjoyed, and shall again enjoy at the call and conversion of the Jews.

And for the latter, Let any revelation of the will of God be produced, whereby he hath withheld this part of the blessing from Believers, and the controversie is at an end. Till then we shall take it for granted, that the blessing of *Abraham* is in this extent and latitude, in and by Christ come upon believing Gentiles. And though it is granted, the direct design of the Apostle in this place is, not to assert the latitude and extent of *Abraham's* blessing, yet the indefiniteness and universality of his expression is a sufficient warrant for our interpreting the blessing in this latitude and extent pleaded for.

~~and the same thing to have been  
done by the said Assembly in the year  
of our Lord 1645.~~

**CHAP. YI.** ~~the~~   
**The fourth and last way of the second is the  
ordination of Propositions confirmation  
prosecuted. Where several passages in  
the New Testament are considered.  
 Five Conclusions deduced from them;  
 The third principally insisted upon;  
 Where it is proved, that the Promise of  
 Salvation appertains to the Houses of  
 believing Parents, as such, without  
 consideration had to the personal Faith  
 and Repentance of any in or of their  
 Houses, besides their own, by two Ar-  
 guments. Objections against each Ar-  
 gument answered.**

**F**ourthly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be further evidenced from several passages and expressions in the new Testament, plainly declaring, that the Infant-seed of Believers under the Gospel administration, are included and taken in, as joyn Subjects with their Parents of the Covenant and Promise thereof, and that by vertue of their Parents relation to Abraham, as his Seed.

Now

Now this last way of evidencing what is pleaded for, though it might require a very large discourse, yet I shall but briefly touch upon it, partly because the truth pleaded for is, as I conceive, sufficiently evidenced from what hath been already spoken, and partly because others have already fully handled and improved these passages and expressions, I have reference unto, for the vindicating and establishing this truth, I in common with them contend for; that to add any thing more, especially there being so little, or rather nothing at all, replyed to any purpose by our Opposers, may seem wholly superfluous; and therefore I shall only produce those passages and expressions in the new Testament, and shew what evidence they give into this second Proposition, in several Conclusions, necessarily flowing from, or grounded upon them, as taken together, and compared one with another.

The Passages and Expressions I have reference unto, are these five.

The first is that of Christ, *Mark 10. 10.*

The second is again that of Christ, *Luke 19. 9.*

The third is that of Peter to the trembling Jews, *Acts 2. 38, 39.*

The fourth is that of Paul to the Jaylot, *Acts 16. 31.*

The last is that of Paul to the Corinibians, *1 Cor. 7. 14.*

From all these Scriptures, as laid together, and compared one with another, these five Conclusions do necessarily follow.

First,

First, That upon Parents believing in Christ, the Promise of salvation belongs not only to themselves, but to their respective Houses : sayes the Apostle to the Jaylor , Believe in the Lord Jesus , and thou shalt be saved, and thine House : where we see the Apostle proposes it as a motive and encouragement to him to believe, in that upon his believing, not only himself, but his house should be saved, that is, both he himself and his house should come under the promise of salvation : or as the Apostle Peter expounds it , *The promise of salvation should be to him and his house ; he and his house should have salvation settled upon them by promise,* according to the true tenor of the promise, which as it did not secure salvation to the Jaylor himself absolutely , but upon condition of his perseverance in faith and obedience ; *He that indires to the end shall be saved : Be faithful unto the death , and I will give thee a Crown of life,* saith Christ to that Church, Rev. 2. 10. from which and the like Scripture it appears , that the promise of salvation, that Believers themselves are under, is not absolute but conditional ; and the same must be understood of the promises, as made to their houses , which through their Parents believing they are brought under,

And as the Apostle promises salvation to the Jaylor and his house, as a motive and encouragement to him to believe, so Christ tells Zacharias, that upon his believing, salvation was come to his house, that is, he and his house were now under the promise of salvation.

As for that conceit of some, that by salvation here Christ himself should be intended; as it is wholly groundless, so an evident perverting of the words of Christ.

For first, Let it be shewed where Christ is ever called salvation simply and absolutely; 'tis true, he is called Gods salvation, and Believers have appropriated him to themselves as their salvation; but that is as he is Author or Efficient of Salvation: This term *Salvation*, when used simply and absolutely, signifies Salvation properly and literally taken.

Secondly, It is evident, that Salvation here is said to be come to *Zacchæus* his house, as a peculiar good accrewing to him upon that very ground, and vouchfased to him for that very reason, because he was now a Son of *Abraham*, and consequently was a good common to all, of whom the same ground and reason might be predicated or spoken, and peculiar and proper to them as such. Now as Christ did not come to all their houses, who were the Children of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, so he might come to their houses, who were not the Sons of *Abraham*, in the one or the other sence.

Thirdly, The Apostle doth clearly expound the meaning of Christ, *Salvation was come to his house*; that is, as the Apostle expounds it, He and his house were under the promise of Salvation. Now did not men too wilfully shut their eyes.

eyes against the light of Scripture, they would not affix a sense upon the words of Christ, nowhere warranted from any other parallel Scripture, but contrary to the design of Christ in them, when they have a plain Exposition made by the Holy Ghost himself: we see what Christ saith of *Zacheus's* house, and the Apostle promises the Jaylor, with reference to his house, that is said and promised upon one and the same ground, viz. the Father of both: Christ saith, *Salvation is come to his house*; he now believing, the Apostle saith, his house shall be saved upon condition of his believing. And who can imagine, but that they both speak of salvation in one and the same sense, and consequently that the Apostle expounds what that salvation was, that Christ saith was come to *Zacheus*, upon his believing; 'twas the same kind of salvation that he promises to the Jaylor, upon condition of his believing.

The second Conclusion. Thus under this term *House*, Children are, in a peculiar and special manner, included and comprehended. How far this term *House*, is to be extended, whether beyond the Children of those, whose house is spoken of, or no, concerns not my present purpose; that they are included and intended under that term *House*, is all that at present I affirm. Now that the Children are intended is evident, partly from that phrase, *Act 16. 33.* where it stands *or*, thy house, verse 31. is expounded by this phrase, *or nuptiæ natus*, all of him,

him; and partly from the frequent acceptation of this term *House* throughout the Scripture ; it being peculiarly appropriated to the Children : Or should the term be more comprehensive, yet it cannot rationally be supposed to exclude them: And yet 'tis further evident by the Apostle Peter, where saith he , *The Promise is to you and your Children :* What Promise ? Why the Apostle Paul tells us, the promise of Salvation ; *The Promise is to thee and thy house,* saith Paul to the Jaylor. But who are we to understand by *House*? Why Peter tells us, his Children. Hence again, as for that conceit of others, that the meaning should be, that salvation was come only to him , and in that it was come to him, it might be said, it was come to his house , 'tis too palpable a perverting the mind of Christ : For let it be observed, that by *Salvation here*, is meant Salvation in a proper sense, as hath been already proved ; and that by *House here*, cannot be meant that material building wherein he dwelt, but his Household or Family. Now how Salvation could be said to be come to his Household, in that it was come to him, when as his Household was no wayes interested or concerned in it , is hard to imagine ; properly it could not be said to be come to his house, himself was not properly his house: So that this interpretation must needs suppose, that Christ here speaks figuratively. Now let it be observed, how utterly improbable it is , that Christ should use a figurative speech, that had a direct tendency to lead men into a mistake about his

his sence and and meaning, when he might have express himself without any figure, in as few and as intelligible words, and thereby prevented the danger of his being mistaken: Had Christ intended that Salvation was come only to Zacheus himself, it had been as easie for him to have said , Salvation is come to this man , as to say , Salvation is come to this house ; and that this phrase, *this house*, did subject men to the danger of mistaking his sence and meaning , in case he had spoken figuratively , is sufficiently evident, because that term *House*, is so frequently, yea, constantly and uniuersally used in a sence different from what this interpretation supposeth that Christ did use it in this place, that term *House*, being constantly and universally used to signifie the Family or Children of those, whose house is spoken of , unless when it signifieth the material building it self: How many hundred places might be instanced in, as an evidence of this? Let it be shewed whereever this term *House* is used as it is supposed to be in this interpretation : neither is it, as I judge, a phrase to be parallel'd in any Language whatsoever, that any good or evil should be said to be come to a house that is, the Family or Household, when it is come only to one in the house , having no reference to any beyond the particular person himself, is an expression not to be parallel'd throughout the whole Scriptures : but now 'tis the constant phrase of Scripture, to express the Family, especially the Children , by that term *House*; 'tis wholly superfluous to enumerate places; so that

that should this term *House* be used thus improperly by Christ in this place , it must needs subject all men to the danger of mistaking his sence and meaning, and the danger must needs be the greater, because the good, viz. Salvation, said here to be come to his house, is so frequently, both in the old and new Testament , held forth , at least very probably, to say no more at present, in such an extent and latitude as to reach the whole Family, especially the Children together with their Parents; thus it was promised to *Abraham*, that *the Families of the Earth should be blessed in him*: So God promises, that he would be the God of all the Families of *Israel*. *Paul* tells the *Jaylor*, that he and his house should be saved. *Peter* tells his awakened hearers, the promise was to them and their Children, that is, in an equivalency to them and their houses. Now when it is found in such variety of passages, that the promise of Salvation extends to whole houses upon the believing of the Parents, men must needs be very apt to conceive, that Christ uses this term *House* , in a sence correspondent to those various passages, wherein the same good is at least probably held forth in such a latitude and extent , as to reach the whole houses of believing Parents. Now I say , can we imagine that Christ should use a phrase in such a sence , as the whole Scripture is unacquainted with, and which is constantly used in another sence , and thereby subject all men to so great danger of mistaking his sence and meaning ; and that also to the upholding of

that

what himself , according to the judgments of our Opposers, he was about to throw down, when he might have exprest himself with as much ease, & alike intelligibly, in proper terms, no way liable to be mistaken, methinks it is very strange how it is possible for any man to imagine it : So that doubtless Christ speaks properly , Salvation was come to *Zacheus* his house, that is, the promise of Salvation did belong to his house, in special to his Children : and this agrees, as already observed , with that promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, *Thou shalt be saved and thy house.*

Thirdly, That the promise of Salvation belongs to the houses of believing Parents, merely as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in, or of their respective houses, and consequently the promise of Salvation may , and frequently doth belong to the houses of believing Parents , antecedent to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, besides themselves. What belongs to the houses of believing Parents , as such , that is, as the houses of such Parents, equally and alike belongs to all the houses of all such Parents , and consequently may belong to the houses of this or that particular believing Parent, when yet none in or of the house have personally believed or repented.

Now the truth of this Conclusion will be evident by a twofold Argument.

First, What belongs to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents, must needs belong to their respective houses, as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their respective houses: But the promise of Salvation belongs to the houses of believing Parents, by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents; and therefore the promise of Salvation must needs belong to all their respective houses, as the houses of such Parents, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of this house.

The Major proposition cannot be denied; for if the promise of Salvation belong to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of something universally predicable of all such Parents, certainly then none can question, but that the promise belongs to those houses, as the houses of such Parents, without consideration had to any thing in, or done by the houses themselves, or any in or of them. If freedom in such a Town or Corporation shall belong to the Children of Free-men, meerly by vertue of their Parents freedom, sure none could question, but that freedom did belong to them, as the Children of such Parents, without consideration had to any thing in respect of the Children themselves.

For the Minor proposition: and thus I have three things to do.

First , To shew what is that thing predictable of believing Parents , by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses .

Secondly , To prove , that the promise of Salvation doth indeed belong to the houses of such Parents , meerly by vertue of that thing predictable of them .

Thirdly , To prove , that that thing , whatever it be , is universally predictable , or is universally true of all such Parents .

For the first , And thus in brief , That thing predictable of believing Parents , by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses , is their relation unto *Abraham* , as his Seed : Therefore saith Christ of *Zacheus* his house , *This day is Salvation come to this house , for as much as he is the Son of Abraham :* 'Tis his Sonship to *Abraham* , or his relation to *Abraham* , as one of his Seed , that interested his house in the promise of Salvation .

Secondly , Which is the main thing to be proved , That the promise of Salvation doth belong to the houses of believing Parents , meerly by vertue of their Parents relation unto *Abraham* , as his Seed . Now this is evident from that passage of Christ concerning *Zacheus* his house , *Salvation is come to this house , for as much as he also is a Son of Abraham* ; that by house is  
not

not meant *Zacheus* himself, is before proved ; it must needs be meant of his Household, or Family, peculiarly intending his Children. Now sayes Christ, *Salvation is come to this house*, that is, to this Household or Family, for as much as he is a Son of *Abraham*. Whether *Zacheus* was a Jew or a Roman is all one as to my purpose , seeing he is considered here, not as a natural , but as a mystical Son of *Abraham* ; and as such a one, Christ affirms, Salvation was come to his house ; plainly grounding his houses right to, and interest in Salvation, upon his own relation to *Abraham* , as one of his Seed : Salvation was not only to himself, but to his household, by virtue of his relation to *Abraham* , as one of his Seed, and that the promise of Salvation belongs to the houses of such Parents, meerly by virtue of that their relation to *Abraham*; is evident, because the Scripture assigns nothing else as necessarily to concur with that their Parents relation unto *Abraham*, for the effecting or producing their houses right to, and interest in the promise : Christ tells us here , That Salvation was come to this mans house by virtue of his relation unto *Abraham* ; and let it be shewed, where any thing else is required,for the effecting or producing that their interest in , and right to the promise.

It may be some will say, 'Tis easily done ; the Apostle Peter makes effectual calling a necessary prerequisite to the Seed of believing Parents interest in, and right to the promises : for faith

he, *The Promise is to you and your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Whence it seems to be evident, that notwithstanding Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, yet the promise of Salvation appertains not to their Children, but upon supposition of their being effectually called.

To that I answer two things ( not to stay upon a vindication of that Text of the Apostle from the unsound sense supposed in this Objection;

First, That Christ doth not say; Salvation shall come to this house, but he speaks in the time past, Salvation is come: 'tis true, if it had been only a promise referring to the time to come, there had been some shew of colour for the supposing such a condition to be implied in it; but Christ saith, Salvation was then come, and that upon that ground, and for that reason, because he also was a Son of *Abraham*. Now should we interpret this affirmation of Christ by that of the Apostle, according to the sense given by our Opposers, his words would run thus, *Salvation is come to this house*; that is, to as many of them as the Lord our God shall call, which would be contradictory for if it were come already, the coming of it could not depend upon a future condition. If the coming of Salvation did depend upon the performance of a future condition, it could not be said to be come already; and therefore we must not interpret this

this passage of Christ by that of Peter, but that passage of Peter by that of Christ.

Secondly, I answer, That this was a good vouchsafed to *Zacheus*, upon the account of his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, and answerably was a good common to all standing alike related to *Abraham*, and proper and peculiar unto them; but now to have the promise of Salvation upon condition of being effectually called, is a good common to all men universally, and therefore the promise is said to be to all whom the Lord our God shall call; but Salvation was come to *Zacheus* his house as he was a Son of *Abraham*; so that we see it was merely by virtue of his relation unto *Abraham*, that the promise of Salvation belongs to his house, Christ affirming, that Salvation was come by virtue of that his relation; and the Scripture being silent as to the necessary concurrence of any thing else for the interesting his house in the promise of Salvation; we may positively conclude, the promise of Salvation doth belong to the houses of all believing Parents, merely by virtue of that their relation to *Abraham* as his Seed, especially if we consider,

Thirdly, That this relation to *Abraham* is universally predicable of all believing Parents: All believing Parents are the Children of *Abraham*, and consequently this could be no privilege peculiar to *Zacheus*, to have Salvation come

to his house, as he was a Son of *Abraham*; but is a privilege common to all believing Parents, they standing alike related to *Abraham* as he did. So that the Minor Proposition is undoubtedly true, whence the Conclusion will undoubtedly follow.

My second Argument is this, If the promise of Salvation may and ought to be applied by the dispensers of the Gospel to believing Parents, both with reference to themselves and their Children, merely as such, that is, as believing Parents, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, then the promise of Salvation must needs belong to them and their houses, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

Certainly if a Minister of the Gospel may apply the promise of Salvation, not only to believing Parents themselves, but to their houses, then that promise belongs not only to them, but to their houses: Ministers may not apply promises any other wayes then as they belong to those to whom the application is made.

Now that the promise of Salvation may and ought to be applyed in this extent and latitude, not only to believing Parents themselves, but to their respective houses, and that merely as such, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of their houses, is evident, past all rational contradiction, - by the

Apostles

Apostles proposing the promise in this extent and latitude to the Jaylor. As the Apostle did propose it to the Jaylor , as a motive to him to believe, it might and ought to have been applied to him upon his actual believing, he might have been assured , that now he and his house should be saved, yet in that way, and according to that method , or upon the terms held forth in the Covenant of Grace ( an account of which we have already given. ) And that the Apostle proposes this promise in the extent and latitu de before exprest to the Jaylor , upon condition of his own believing, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house , is evident from the express words of the Text; *Thou shalt be saved and thy house*; and consequently might have been applied to him, as a Believer , upon his actual believing ; and hence it appears, that this promise did not appertain to him alone, it was not a priviledge peculiar to him; to have his house under the same promise with himself, but a privilege common to all believing Parents. *Quatenus ipsum, concludes de omni.*

The only Objection I have met with is this ; That as the Promise was made conditionally, to the Jaylor himself, so to his house, that is, as the Apostle promised to him, that if he believed he should be saved ; so he promised to him , with reference to his house , that if they believed they should be saved , according to the interpretation given of that promise of Peter, *Act 2. 39.*

To

To that I answer, That though it is readily granted, that the promise, as externally proposed, was conditionall both to himself, and his house, yet I say, that his own believing did give his house an actual right to, and interest in the promise ( yet to be fulfilled, according to the terms of the Covenant) is evident, because there could be no reason of the Apostles adding that other branch of the promise as a motive to him to believe, unless by his believing a peculiar good ( which can be nothing else but this right to, and interest in the promise ) did accrue to his house. It had been a stronger motive for the Apostle to have said, Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, and all the Town, or Country, yea, all the World. If the Apostle had not intended a peculiar good, in relation to the salvation of his house, redounding to them by his believing, there had been no more reason for him to mention his house, than for him to have mentioned the whole Town or Country, or whole World, in as much as they should all be saved upon condition of their believing.

And hence, whereas when this consideration is urged to prove, That the Apostle Peter holds forth and declares the Covenant, and promises thereof, in this latitude and extent, to those awakened Jews, *Act 2.29.*

It is replyed, That there were other Reasons of his mentioning their Children, then the asserting their right to, and interest in the Covenant and Promise thereof. That shift ( for so I shall call it ) can have no place here, for if it

should

should be granted, that the Apostle Peter might mention the Children of these Jews, with respect to that imprecation they were under, recorded in *Mattb.* 27.25. or with respect to that first offer and tender of Christ and the grace of the Gospel to be made to the Jews; yet there could be no such reason of the Apostle mentioning the Jaylors house, they were under no such imprecation, neither had they any priviledge above others, in point of the offers and tenders of Salvation to be made to them; and therefore the only reason imaginable of the Apostles mentioning of his house, was to assure him, that upon his believing he should injoy the promise of Salvation, in the extent and latitude it was at the first establishment of the Covenant given unto *Abraham*: had not the promise extended to his house, as well as to himself, personally considered, there had been no reason for the Apostle to mention his house, and tell him, that not only himself, but his house should be saved, had not a peculiar good redounded to his house by his believing: It had been a more effectual motive to have told him, that the whole Town should have been saved, in as much as then his house had been included, and he had had a further intimation of the probability of other of his Friends, Relations and Acquaintance Salvation.

Secondly, I answer, If we compare this promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, with that forementioned passage of Christ concerning *Zacheus*

*thens* his house , 'tis evident, the Apostle propoundeth this promise , in both branches of it, to him , upon the alone condition of his personal believing ; and his meaning is , that in case he himself should believe , he and his house should be saved, that is, as Peter ( as hath been already observed ) expounds it, the promise of Salvation would be to him and his house ; and that this is his meaning , appears from that parallel passage of Christ : Christ tells *Zacheus*, *Salvation was come to his house* , upon his own believing, and that upon that very ground, or for that very reason , because he now was a Son of *Abraham*, and upon the same ground , and for the same reason, we must suppose that the Apostle makes this promise to the Jaylor ; the Apostle is to be understood , according to that of Christ ; it is as if he had said , believe in the Lord Jesus, and thereby thou wilt become a Son of *Abraham*, and as so related to him, shall enjoy the promises in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to him at the first establishment of it. God will be a God to thee and thy house, that is eminently thy Children, which is all one as to the fence and importance of that promise , Salvation shall come to thee and thy house, or, The promise will be to thee and thy Children : all these phrases are of one and the same importance and signification. So that from all, the truth of this our third Conclusion evidently appears , and from it , before I proceed to the other , we may infer these two things.

First, That it is not at all necessary to affirm or prove, that there were any Infants in the Jaylors house at this time, in order to the proving, from the Apostles making this conditional promise to him and his house; that the promises of the Covenant are given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him; if he had any Infants, the promise had belonged to them as part of his house; the promise was to him, with reference to his house, as a Believer, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house; hence whoever was to be included in this term *house*, had the promise appertaining to them, whether capable of believing or repenting or no, and consequently had appertained to his Infants, in case he had had any, they being necessarily to be included in this term *house*; and suppose there was no Infants in his house at that time, yet in that this was a promise, not peculiar and proper to him, but common to all Believers, the promise belongs to the Infants in their respective houses. The promise appertains to the house, by virtue of the Parents believing, as thereby they are ingrafted into *Abraham's Family*, and become one of his Seed; and hence all that are included in that term *house*, have the promise appertaining unto them, and consequently Infants as well as others.

And if it should be said, There might be some Children grown up, who might refuse to accept of the promise, as made upon the terms of the Gospel, and how could the promise appertain to them.

I answer, Their case would have been the very same with the case of the Jews, at the first preaching of the Gospel. The promise appertain'd to them, as of the houses of believing Parents, but their actual refusal would have, *ipso facto*, disanulled that their right and title to the promise, and so they, by their own sin, had deprived themselves of the good promised.

Secondly, We may infer, that the Scripture frequently mentioning the personal faith and repentance of the houses, or of any in the houses of believing Parents, no way opposes, but on the other hand strongly confirms the truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition, concerning the settlement of *Abraham's* promise, in the full latitude and extent of it, upon believing Gentiles, in that the houses, or any in the houses of believing Parents, were savingly wrought upon, either at the same time, or immediately after their Parents believing and accepting the terms of the Covenant, it cannot be with the least shew of reason inferred or concluded from thence, that they had not the promise of Salvation appertaining to them, meerly as the houses, or as of the houses of such Parents, without

without consideration had to their own personal faith and repentance ; but on the other hand it doth strongly prove , they were under the promise, as the houses of such Parents, in their believing and repenting 'the Promise was verified ; their believing and repenting was a visible demonstration , that the promise , in the extent and latitude before express, viz. as reaching and taking in the houses with the Parents themselves , was duly and rightfully applyed to such Parents by the Apostle , when we find the Apostle applyes the promises of the Covenant to the Gentiles , in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, viz. as taking in their Children with them , and then read of the faith and repentance of their Children, immediately following upon their own believing, it may more fully assure us, that the promise runs still in the same latitude and extent that it formerly run in : why, we have not only the Apostles application of the promise for our assurance, but we have God himself confirming that application made by the Apostle, in his giving in the good promised, in that extent and latitude,in which the Apostle did apply the promise : The Apostle applyes the promise in this extent, *Thou and thy house shall be saved*: God by actually giving in the good promised, assures us, that the Apostles application was according to his mind and will, that he was and would be still a God, not only to believing Gentiles,personally considered, but a God also to their respective houses: So that whether there were any

Infans

Infant-children, or any Children in their Infant capacity in these houses, the baptism of which is recorded in Scripture, or no, is all one as to what I contend for. The promise of Salvation, which is equivalently the same with that of Gods being a God to them, appertains to the houses of believing Parents, as such, without consideration had to the personal faith of those houses, or any in them. If there were no Infant-children, yet the promise appertains to the house; if there were, the promise appertained to them as part of such a house: and the mention made in Scripture of the personal faith and repentance of such houses, or any in them, no way opposes, but confirms their interest in, and right to that promise of Salvation, and consequently they ought to be baptized, as will appear from the proof of our third Proposition.

But let that suffice, for the second Conclusion, which is that I principally aimed at, and therefore have especially insisted upon it. I shall but mention the other two. And therefore,

Fourthly, That the interest that the houses of believing Parents have in the promise of Salvation denominates them holy, and constitutes them of the Kingdom, Church, or Mystical Body of Christ; this I gather from *Mark 10.* and *1 Cor. 7.14.* taken in conjunction with those other new Testament Scriptures aforementioned.

Lastly, That this interest in the promise of Salvation accrues to the houses of believing Parents, by virtue of such Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed : This is evident from that of Christ concerning *Zacharias*, *Salvation is come to his house, for as much as he is a Son of Abraham.* And from all it appears, that the very same promise, made to *Abraham* and his natural Seed, is still continued to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, which is our second Proposition : Let us now hear what is objected against what is asserted in it.

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CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

*Objections against the second subordinate Proposition, considered and answered.*

*Object. I.*

**T**is conceived by some , and that not a few, that what hath been affirm'd in the foregoing Propositions , at least the latter of them, lies in a direct opposition to that Text of the Apostle, Rom. 9. 7, 8. and therefore cannot be true. And thus 'tis objected : How can it be true, that God should intend Abraham's natural Seed ( take it of his natural Seed in the sence of the first Position ) and that as such, in that promise , wherein he ingages himself to be a God to him and his Seed ; or how can it be true, that this promise , in that latitude and extent should be given to , and settled upon believers

lievers under the new Testament ; when the Apostle, having a direct reference to this very promise, positively affirms, *That the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed.* Say our Opposers, Certainly it cannot be true, that God should intend Abraham's natural Seed, that is, the Children of his flesh, and that merely as such, in that promise ; or suppose that promise might have a literal respect to Abraham's natural Seed, as such, yet sure it cannot be true, that this promise is given to, or settled upon believers under the new Testament, so as that God should still stand obliged by that promise, to be a God to them and their natural Seed ; for the Apostle tells us in express words, *That the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the promise are accounted for the Seed.*

For answer to this Objection I shall, as the Lord shall assist, do these two things,

First, Shew that there is no contrariety or repugnancy, between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propositions, or either of them, and this Text of the Apostle.

Secondly, Shew that this place of the Apostle rightly understood, contributes not a little to the establishment and confirmation of what hath been said in the foregoing Propositions.

For the first , That there is no repugnancy between what hath been affirmed and this Text of the Apostle, will soon appear, by declaring what is the true and genuine sense of the Apostle in these verses : and thus it is agreed on all hands , that the Apostles design and scope is to open and declare how that word of promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, stood firm, and had its full accomplishment, according to the true intendment of God in it , notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of his seed.

*Beza*, I judge, doth rightly state the Question answered by the Apostle, *Qui fieri possit ut rejeclus sit Israel quin simul constitendum videatur irritum esse pactum Dei cum Abrahamo & ejus semine.* That was the Question , How *Israel* could be rejected, and the Covenant that God , made with *Abraham* and his Seed, not made void thereby.

Now to this Question the Apostle answers in a twofold general Assertion.

First , That all are not *Israel* that are of *Israel*.

Secondly, That because they are the Seed of *Abraham* they are not all Children.

Two things might be urged as Reasons, why the Jews could not be rejected without a failure on Gods part , in his promises to them : The latter, which they mainly insisted upon, was, That they were the Seed of *Abraham*, and that God had promised to be a God to him and his Seed after him.

To this latter plea the Apostle answers in this latter assertion, and shews, that their rejection did not make void that promise of God, and in order hereunto explains the true sense and meaning of that promise.

This the Apostle doth in these two verses ; so that these two verses contain the Apostles exposition of that grand promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Now that we may rightly understand the Apostle in the exposition he gives us of this promise, and not mistake about his exposition, as the Jews did about the promise it self, we must inquire into two things.

First, What the Apostle denies.

Secondly, What he affirms, with reference to that promise.

For the first, And thus the Apostle denies that all that were the Seed of *Abraham*, and had that promise appertaining to them , as his Seed, were the Children of God : Thus verse 7. Neither because they are the Seed of *Abraham*, are

they all Children, which is explained in the next verse ; where observe, when the Apostle sayes, *The children of the flesh*, these are not the children of God, he must be interpreted by the words immediately foregoing, and his meaning is, they are not all the children of God, for so he expresses himself in the foregoing words. In this eighth verse the Apostle amplifies, and further explains what he had more generally laid down in the seventh verse ; whence it is evident, that he speaks of the same persons in both ; and answerably, as by the children of the flesh, ver. 8. the same persons are intended that are express by that phrase, *the Seed of Abraham*, ver. 7. so when he says of the children of the flesh, *they are not the children of God*, he means only, as he had afore express, they are not all the children of God : some that were the children of the flesh, were also the children of God, as *Isaac* in particular ; but all that were the children of the flesh were not the children of God.

Now I say, the Apostle denies that those that were the *Seed of Abraham*, or the children of the flesh, were all the children of God : where considering what the general design and scope of the Apostle is, viz. to prove the consistency of *Israels* rejection with the truth of that promise, by opening and declaring the true mind and meaning of God in it, these two things are clearly supposed and implied by the Apostle.

First, That those who are not the children of God, whatever reference or respect the promise had to them, yet might be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

Secondly, That the promise did not necessarily presuppose that God had done, or was obliged to do, for every one to whom the promise did appertain, what was absolutely necessary to their being or becoming the children of God, in such a sence as that they could not be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

These two things the Apostle must needs imply and suppose in this Negation: and hence the full of what he denyes is this, That this promise, whether taken as a definite promise, respecting *Abraham's* natural Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, singularly considered, or as an indefinite promise, respecting his whole race and posterity, collectively considered, did oblige God, either to be their God and own them as his people, but upon supposition of their being his children, or to do that for each particular of them, absolutely necessary to their bearing that denomination of his children.

And if any ask, What that is that is absolutely necessary to a persons bearing the denomination of a Child of God.

I answer two things.

First, Election before time.

Secondly, Supposing that person grown up to years of maturity , conversion or a saving work of grace upon the heart in time.

Now all that the Apostle denies is, That this promise did necessarily presuppose , that all to whom it was made, were elected or chosen of God actually to inherit the good promised , or that the promise did oblige God savingly to work upon them in time ; whence in respect of individual and particular persons, as they might not be elected , so they might not be savingly converted , and thereupon might be rejected of God , without any breach of promise on his part.

Secondly , What the Apostle doth affirm with reference to this promise ; and thus he doth affirm, That the children of the promise are accounted for the Seed.

Now here again two things must be inquired into.

First, Who the Apostle means by the children of the promise ? And for this, these must needs be such of Abraham's natural Seed who might rightfully bear that denomination of the children of God ; children of the promise must needs intend such of Abraham's Seed, or such children of his flesh , who were not only the children of his flesh , but also the children of God .

God. For let it be observed, that the question was concerning *Abraham's Seed*, or the children of his flesh, and that as such having that promise pertaining unto them ; whence it will undeniably follow, that both those who were not the children of God, and those who were the children of the promise, were *Abraham's natural Seed* ; and consequently, by the children of the promise we must understand the elect of *Abraham's natural Seed*, or such who amongst them had a saving work of grace wrought upon them.

Secondly, How they are said to be accounted for the Seed? Now for this : They are said by the Apostle, to be accounted for the Seed in some peculiar and special sense, in which the other of *Abraham's Seed*, as contradistinguished from them, were not accounted for the Seed : Now that can be only in respect of their election before time, and their actual enjoyment of the good promised in time ; they cannot be said to be accounted for the Seed in this sense, as though none but these were intended in that promise, for the Reason before given, viz. Because the question concerning the whole natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as they were intended in that promise ; so that they could not be accounted for the Seed, as though they alone were intended in that promise ; for the Apostle grants, yea, the very Question he answers, doth necessarily suppose others to be intended in

in that promise besides them ; therefore these can be said to be accounted for the Seed only, in the sence and upon the account beforementioned.

From all it is evident , that the Apostle doth not deny that *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, were intended in that grand Promise of the Covenant ; nor doth he affirm , that the children of the promise were only accounted for the Seed , in relation to an interest in that promise : All that he denyes is , That they are all the children of God : And all that he affirms is , That they, in a peculiar and special sence, were accounted for the Seed in the eye of that promise : So that the plain and genuine meaning of the Apostle is this , as if he should say, when God promised to be a God to *Abraham* and to his Seed, that doth not presuppose that all his children were elected , or that God was obliged by that promise savingly to work upon every individual of his Seed ; whereupon they might be rejected of God , and yet his word of promise receive its full accomplishment , there being a certain number chosen of God from eternity ; whom in time he savingly works upon , and who in that regard were eminently intended as the Seed in that promise, and in the accomplishment of the promise to them it is fully verified , according to the true intent, mind and meaning of God in it.

Now then what repugnancy or contrariety is there between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propositions, or either of them, and this Text of Scripture?

We affirm, that when God promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the first and next Subjects of this promise, and that this promise in the same latitude and extent is settled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles: the Apostle denies it not, only saith, that all to whom the promise was made are not the children of God, and thereupon might be rejected, and yet the word of promise not made void thereby; withall affirming, that there was a certain number in and among this Seed of *Abraham*, to whom this promise did appertain, that were elected of God, who never were rejected, but had the promise alwayes made good to them, and in that regard had the denomination of *Abraham's* Seed peculiarly due to them, and that the promise was fully accomplished in their injoyment of the good promised. Now I say, what shew of contrariety between what we affirm, and what the Apostle saith?

Now that this was the true intendment, mind and meaning of God in this promise, the Apostle proves, by producing a twofold Instance, wherein God himself declared that to be his sence and meaning in it.

First, He instances in the Subjects of this Promise immediately descended from *Abraham's* own loins, these were, among others, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*: and here the Apostle shews how God declared his true sense and meaning in that Promise, by his chusing *Isaac* actually to inherit the good promised, when he passed by *Ishmael*, who thereupon, through his own sin, was rejected of God, and cast out of Covenant: This peculiar choice of *Isaac* was signified to *Abraham* by promise, *At the set time will I come, and Sarah shall have a Son*; by that Promise God did tacitely intimate to *Abraham*, that *Isaac*, the Son promised him by *Sarah*, was the person chosen for the actual injoyment of the good promised; and this choice of *Isaac* was a tacite intimation, that *Ishmael* was passed by, and not designed to the joyn*t* inheriting of the good promised with *Isaac*.

Secondly, The Apostle instances in the Subjects of this Promise mediately descended from *Abraham*, for look what was the sense of the Promise made to *Abraham*, the same was the sense and meaning of it as made to his Seed; and thus the Apostle instances in the Children of *Isaac*, and shews again how God did declare what was his mind and meaning in this Promise, as it was made to *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, viz. That as thereby he intended not infallibly to secure the good promised to all *Abraham's* immediate Children, so he intended

not

not thereby to secure the good promised to all the Children of his Seed, as included with them in the Promise, as made to them in their Generations; this the Lord declared by his choice of *Jacob*, when he passed by *Esau*; which choice was again signified to *Isaac* by promise, *The elder shall serve the younger*; by that promise God signified to *Isaac*, that he had chosen *Jacob* as the person that should actually inherit the good promised, whereby he intimated his passing by of *Esau*.

Now upon the warrant of this twofold instance, the Apostle declares the sense afore given, to be according to the mind and meaning of God in this promise; and that this is the true sense and meaning of the Apostles exposition of this Promise, is sufficiently evident from what hath been already said in the explication of the words, where it hath been proved, that the Apostle cannot be understood, as though he denied that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such were intended in that Promise; the Question he answers being concerning *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such having that Promise appertaining to them: and therefore he cannot be supposed to deny them to be intended in the Promise, the very Question he answers taking it for granted, that they were intended.

And if any should say, It is true, the Question doth suppose and take for granted, that the

the Jews , or the persons putting it , did conceive, that the Promise did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, but that was their mistake, which the Apostle rectifies.

But to that I answer , The whole context shews it was otherwise ; and that the Apostle himself doth suppose it, and take it for granted ; The Apostle doth not answer a Question that might be grounded upon a mistake about the Subjects of that Promise, but he answers a Question grounded upon what really was : we see he grants some to be of *Israel*, that were not *Israel*, and that some were the Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that Promise, who yet were not the Children of God ; and consequently he cannot deny *Abraham's* natural Seed to be intended in that Promise , nor affirm the Children of the Promise were only accounted for the Seed ; but that they are so accounted in a peculiar and special sence before opened. Now I say , that the Apostle is thus to be understood , I shall indeavour to make out a little further , though what hath been already said might suffice to those that will but seriously weigh things.

And for this let it be observed , that if the Apostle doth not restrain this term *Seed*, in that Promise, only to the Elect, then there is nothing at all said by him in this exposition he gives us of it ; so much as in the least intimating that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such, were

were not intended in that Promise. As for what he denyes, with reference to that Promise, there is no one word intimating that *Abraham's* natural Seed were not intended, he only denyes, that all the Seed of *Abraham* were the Children of God ; which might be true , though they were all intended in that Promise , as conditionally made and externally declared to *Abraham*.

Now if so be he doth not restrain this term *Seed* in this Promise only to the Elect , and so exclude all others universally from being intended in it, the natural Seed of *Abraham* , and that as such,might be, for ought what the Apostle hath said, intended in it. And as for what he affirms , though the Elect were in a peculiar and special sence intended , yet others might be also intended , though not in that peculiar and special sence in which they were.

Now that the Apostle doth not expound this term *Seed*,as meant only of the Elect, is evident by these three Reasons.

First, Because then he should in express words contradict God himself , God having declared that he intended some in that Promise , who were not elected , this is evident in *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12, 13.* where the Lord tells the people of *Israel*,he now entred into, or rather renewed Covenant with them, to fulfil this very Promise made to *Abraham* , with reference to his Seed : and certainly he must needs refer to this very Promise

Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed: and certainly he must needs refer to this very Promise made to *Abraham*. Only to prevent mistakes, and that I may not be supposed to contradict both the Truth and my self, let it be noted, that I do not say they were intended in that Promise, so as that they had meerly, as of *Abraham's* natural Race and Posterity, an actual right to, and interest in that Promise; but my meaning is only this, That as that Promise had an indefinite respect to *Abraham's* whole Race and Posterity, collectively taken, and as these particular persons, with whom God now renewed his Covenant, were afore appointed of God to be some of those who should have the benefit of the Promise, so these were intended in it, and answerably these were intended, not immediately and directly, but consequently as they were foreseen and fore appointed by God, to be the peculiar persons that should have the Promise, as indefinitely made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken, made good to them. Now who can suppose that every individual Member, whether Infants or grown Persons in this Congregation, were elected or chosen actually to enjoy the good promised? Now if the Apostle should restrain this Promise only to the Elect, he must needs contradict God in this declaration here made of his mind in it. God declares plainly, he intended some not elected; and should the Apostle say, he intended only the Elect, that would

would be a direct contradiction of God himself.

Secondly, That the Apostle cannot expound this term *Seed*, as meant only of the Elect, is evident, because at least many persons intended in that Promise might be ordinarily known to men to be the persons intended in it; but now the Elect cannot ordinarily be known by men, and that at least many intended in this Promise might ordinarily be known to be the persons intended in it, is evident, because there was a duty enjoyned, with reference to them; this duty was the application of the Token of the Covenant. Now had the Elect only been intended, it had been impossible for that duty to be universally performed by man, with reference to them.

Thirdly, This is evident, because the Promise did constitute some of *Israel*, who yet were not elected; therefore the Apostle cannot be supposed to restrain the term *Seed* only to the Elect.

But two things will be said by way of reply to what hath been hitherto discoursed, for the clearing up the sense and meaning of the Apostle in this exposition he here gives of that Promise.

First, It will be said , That all those that make this Objection do not deny but, some do grant, that that promise did in some sence intend, and had respect to *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, viz. as it was a promise of a temporal good , or containing only a temporal blessing, that which these deny is this, viz. That this Promise ( as a Promise of saving Grace , of Justification and Life ) had respect to the natural Seed of *Abraham* , as such ; and that is the meaning of the Apostle when he sayes , *The Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed*, he means, they and they only are accounted for the Seed , respective to that Promise, as it was a promise of saving Grace : The Apostle grants the Promise was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed , but there shews what their mistake was, that did suppose the Promise would be made void, in case the Jews should be rejected, and shews this to be their mistake , That they supposed that this Promise , as it was a Promise of saving Grace, did appertain to the natural Seed of *Abraham*, as such.

Now this mistake the Apostle rectifies , and shews , that as such a spiritual Promise, it did not at all respect *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, but was made only to the Elect, they only were accounted for the Seed,

Seed , respective to this Promise as so understood.

To that I answer two things.

First, Let it be observed, that the present framers of this Objection , in the sence now expressed, do grant, that the Promise in some sence did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such ; whence it will follow, that if it be evident, that it intended not only a temporal, but a spiritual good, as made to *Abraham's* Seed universally, as well as to himself; of which by and by, then our first Proposition is true by the grant at least of some of our Opposers, they granting that in a sence it did intend them.

But you will say, Whatever Argument may be offered, yet the Apostle shews plainly, that as it was a Promise of saving Grace , it was made only to the Elect, for saith he, taking the Promise in this sence , *The Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed*, and we must believe the Apostle whatever Argument may seem to prove the contrary.

I answer to this.

Secondly, Consider the Apostle doth no more restrain this Promise , as a Promise of

saving Grace to the Elect, than he doth restrain it to them as a Promise of a meer temporal good, if he doth not restrain it to them wholly, and in an absolute fence; he doth not restrain it to them at all; for observe it, in case he restrains it as a spiritual Promise, and not as a temporal Promise, to the Elect, that limited restraint must be exprest either in the words themselves, or inferre'd from the Context or the Apostles scope in them. For the words themselves, there is nothing intimating such a limited restraint, for sayes he, *The Children of the flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed.* He doth not say, the Children of the flesh are not intended in that Promise, as a Promise of saving Grace. So the Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed; not are accounted for the Seed, as that Promise was a Promise of saving Grace.

But it will be said, When he sayes of the Children of the flesh, they are not the Children of God, 'tis all one as if he had said, they were not intended in that Promise, as it is a Promise of saving Grace.

To that I answer: 'Tis not all one, in as much as 'tis possible, that persons may be under a Promise of saving Grace, as made conditionally

ditionally to them, and yet not be the Children of God, in the sense of the Apostle, nor ever become the Children of God in that sense: So that unless it can be proved, that none can be under a Promise of saving Grace, as conditionally made, or under a Promise of saving Grace as indefinitely made to some species or sort of persons, collectively taken, unless they are either at present the Children of God, or shall infallibly become so for the future, it cannot be said, 'tis all one to say, that for the Apostle to deny the natural Seed of *Abraham* to be the Children of God, and to deny they are intended in that Promise, as a Promise of saving Grace, because they might be intended in that Promise, and yet never be the Children of God. Persons may be under a conditional promise, or an indefinite promise of saving Grace, and yet cannot be from thence denominated in an absolute sense to be the Children of God, nor proved thereby, that they should ever become so; so that such a limited restraint of this promise to the Elect only, is not in the least intimated in the words themselves.

Secondly, For, the context and scope of the Apostle neither doth infer such a limited restraint of the Promise to the Elect only, or a necessity of putting such construction upon

the words ; this is evident from what hath been already said in explaining the sence and meaning of them : The words, as afore opened, as fully agree to and answer the Apostles design and scope , as if they were understood with a limited restraint, they would do, and do as fully answer and satisfie the Question or Objection he was to answer.

This is so plain , that it would be superfluous to add any thing more than what hath been already said : So that there is nothing in the words themselves , or that can be deduced from the Context, or the Apostles design and scope in them , to necessitate our understanding the Apostle to intend any such limited restraint of this promise to the Elect only ; if it be not wholly and absolutely restrained to them , it is not restrained to them at all, for ought what appears from the Text of the Apostle.

Now our Opposers themselves grant, That in some sence the promise was not restrained to the Elect , but did intend *Abraham's natural Seed*, as such, and therefore we may conclude it was not at all restrained to them.

But it will be said secondly, That though it be granted, that this promise, as intending both

both temporal and spiritual blessings, did intend, and was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such, and consequently that the Covenant did take in *Abraham's* natural Seed under the first Testament, as is affirmed in the first Proposition; yet the Apostle here shews, that now under the Gospel administration it should be so no longer.

Now the Children of the flesh are not the Children of God in any sense, but the Children of the Promise, that is, true Believers are only accounted for *Abraham's* Seed.

To that I answer, 'Tis evident from the Context, that the Apostle speaks not at all of the extent and latitude in which the Covenant should be made with, or continued to Believers under the New Testament, for the Question he is answering doth not all immediately and directly concern Believers under the New Testament, but wholly immediately and directly concerns the Jewes. And observe it, What an answer should the Apostle return to the proposed Question, according to the judgment of those that make this reply.

The Question was, How could *Israel* be rejected, and God remain true to his Word

of promise made to *Abraham* their Father, with reference unto them.

Now what doth the Apostle answer to this Question?

Why, according to the Judgment of these men he answers, That though the Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, yet now it is only made with Believers themselves, and extends not to their natural Seed, as it did during the first Testament administration.

And what had that been to the purpose, not only the Jewish Infants, but the Parents themselves were rejected.

I, you will say, That Parents were cast off as well as their Seed is granted, yea, that is the very design of the Apostle to shew, that now under the Gospel administration the Jews themselves, though *Abraham*'s natural Seed, could no longer continue the people of God, upon the account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, unless they did personally believe themselves, and they not believing, both they and their Children were rejected from those privileges they had hitherto enjoyed, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*.

To

To this I answer two things.

First, I deny that the Jews had their Covenant state and relation, and consequently their abiding, in the House or Family of God continued to them hitherto, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*, as hath been already declared, and might be further manifested if needful: Hence this could not be the design of the Apostle, to shew the cessation of that privilege, because there was no such privilege heretofore vouchsafed to them, the promise considered as a definite promise, did not extend beyond *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, I answer, That that Promise, as an indefinite promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, taken collectiely, doth still appertain to the Jews, notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of them: This the Apostle grants in this discourse, and shews how it had in part its accomplishment in the non-rejection of many of them, and shall have its full accomplishment in the general conversion of that Nation in the Ages yet to come. See *Rom. 11. 1, 16, 25.* So that this cannot be the meaning of the Apostle, because

excuse their present standing in their Covenant-relation with God , from which they were now cut off , was not upon the mere account of their natural descent from *Abraham* , and the Promise , according to the true intent of God in it , doth still appertain to them , notwithstanding their rejection , therefore we must necessarily understand the Apostle , according to the sense and meaning aforesaid .

I come now to the second thing promised , and that is to shew , that this Text of the Apostle rightly understood , and taken in conjunction with the Context , is so far from carrying any contrariety to what hath been affirm'd , that it adds not a little to the confirmation of it . Yea , I dare boldly say , that had there been no other Scriptures to prove the truth of it , my first Proposition would be , past all rational contradiction , established from this very Text ; and my second Proposition may receive no little confirmation from it .

For let it be observed , the Apostle doth plainly grant , yea , implicitly assert , that some were the Seed of *Abraham* , and that as such , were the Subjects of that promise , who yet were not the Children of God , and in that regard

regard were not accounted for the Seed, whence it is evident, that the same persons might be the Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that promise, and yet in another sence were not accounted for the Seed: they were his Seed, that is, the Seed of his flesh, or his natural Seed, and as such, had the promise appertaining to them; but they were not the Children of God, and in that regard not accounted for the Seed, that is, not intended in this promise, as the persons designed from eternity, actually to enjoy the good promised; and that notwithstanding according to the Apostles intendment in this term *Seed*, they were not accounted for the Seed, yet they were the fleshly Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that promise, as the joyn Subjects of it, with others, here said by the Apostle, in a special sence, to be accounted for the Seed, is past all rational doubt evident from the Apostles answer to the forementioned Question, taken in conjunction with the Instances produced by him, for the proof of what he asserts in that Answer.

Let but the words be carefully observed: Saith the Apostle, *Neither because they are Abraham's Seed, are they all Children*, that is, the Children of God: Whence it is evident, that some are the Seed of

*Abraham*,

*Abraham*, who were not the Children of God ; and that when the Apostle grants , some were the Seed of *Abraham* ; who were not the Children of God , his meaning is , that they had , as the Seed , or natural Children of *Abraham* , this promise appertaining unto them , is evident .

First , Because the Question he was to answer wholly concern'd the natural Seed of *Abraham* , and that as such , having that promise appertaining unto them , as before observed : hence undoubtedly when in way of answer to this Question he saith , because they are the Seed of *Abraham* , they are not all the Children of God , he must needs speak of the same persons that the Question doth concern , otherwise his answer had been no wayes pertinent to the Question .

Secondly , This is evident from the Instances that the Apostle produces to prove what he had asserted in this answer ; and thus he instances in *Isaac* , and *Jacob* , and shews how they were elected , and in that regard accounted for the Seed ; where the Apostle must needs have reference to some others coming in competition with them , in regard of their standing in a like capacity respective to the promise as externally made and declar'd to *Abraham* : plainly thus the Apostle

Apostle must needs have reference to some others who were *Abraham's Seed*, and as such had a common external right to, and interest in the promises with *Isaac* and *Jacob*; and these were *Ishmael* and *Esau*; did not the Apostle suppose and grant, that they stood in the like capacity, respective to these promises, as externally made and declared to *Abraham*, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the producing of these two Instances had made nothing to his purpose, nor had been any proof of what he had before asserted, in way of answer to the Question proposed; for the Apostle to assert, that all that are *Abraham's Seed* are not the Children of God, and that by way of answer to the forementioned Question, and then only to declare how *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the one of *Abraham's Seed*, immediately proceeding from his one loins, the other of his Race and Posterity, were intended in this promise, as made to *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations, as being elected, and not to suppose and grant, that there were some others, who were alike, either of *Abraham's immediate Seed*, or of his Race and Posterity, intended in this promise, who were not elect, had made nothing at all to his present purpose, but would indeed have evidenced the quite contrary to what he affirms. Whence it appears, in as full evidence as though written with the beams of the Sun, that the Apostle doth grant,

grant , that both *Ishmael* and *Esau* were the Subjects of this promise , the one as one of *Abraham's* Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins , the other included in the promise , as made to *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, and consequently that the promise did belong to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, which undoubtedly establishes the truth of my first Proposition, and no way opposes, but rather confirms the second.

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CHAP.

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## CHAP. VIII.

*A second, third, and fourth Objection, against the foregoing Proposition refuted.*

## Object. 2.

Some object, That the Promise, wherein God engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his seed, cannot in that latitude and extent be relied upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles, because that Covenant Believers are now under, is a Covenant wholly divers from that established with *Abraham*; and when the Covenants are divers, the good covenanted cannot be one and the same, at least the Subjects of the one cannot lay claim to the good of the other, by virtue of that Covenant they are under: hence a Believer, as a Believer, that is, as *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, could not lay claim to the old Covenant-promises, if not descended from *Abraham* by *Isaac* after the flesh; so a Believers fleshly seed, take it either of *Abraham*, or any other Believer, cannot lay claim to the New Covenant Promises, unless

born again, and engraffed into Christ by Faith.

Now before I return a direct Answer to this Objection, I shall a little enquire what are the true Notions and Conceptions of the persons framing it, about that Covenant entred by God with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, that so rightly understanding their sense and apprehensions of that Covenant, I may return a more full and direct answer to what is objected. And thus, for ought I can yet understand, either by the most serious perusal of their Writings, or by what I can gather from their words, they express and declare their Notions and Conceptions, we are now enquiring after; one of these two wayes.

First, That God made a twotold Covenant with *Abraham*, the one a Covenant of Grace, the other a legal or temporal Covenant, and that the Covenant of Grace was made with him, and his spiritual Seed, .viz. Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, without any respect at all to a fleshly descent, either from *Abraham* himself, or from any of his Seed.

Secondly, That the legal or temporal Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his fleshly Seed, and only with them, and that as continued in the line of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and that this was the Covenant, the Jews, during the first Testament administration, were under, and the only Cov-

Covenant they were under, as the fleshly Seed of Abraham.

Secondly , Others declare their sense and conception thus, That there was but one Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that was a mixt Covenant , consisting partly of spiritual , and partly of temporal Promises ; and as this Covenant was a mixt Covenant, so answerably the Seed of *Abraham* must be distinguished off. There was, say they, his natural Seed, and there was and is his spiritual Seed, Now these hold that the Covenant, as consisting of temporal, or as some express it , domestick or politick blessings, was made with *Abraham*, and his natural or fleshly Seed in their generations ; but the Covenant, as consisting of spiritual blessings , was made with *Abraham* only, as a spiritual Father, and with his spiritual Seed , that is , Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. Now though our Opposites do thus variously express themselves, yet they all agree in the general, that only temporal blessings did appertain to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as such, and that spiritual blessings were wholly or alone promised to *Abraham* , in reference to his spiritual or mystical Seed ; and some add, that the Covenant, as consisting of temporal blessings, was a typical Covenant, viz. a Covenant typifying the Gospel Covenant , under which Believers now are ; though how to make sense of that notion, especially themselves granting a Covenant of Grace was now established with *Abraham*, with reference to himself and

his spiritual Seed, will, I judge, be a matter of no little difficulty ; but I shall leave it to the persons concerned in it, if any such yet there be. And thus I have given a brief, yet, I suppose, a full account of the Notions and Conceptions of our Objectors, about the Covenant now established with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, and come now to answer the Objections proposed : And for answer to it I shall do these two things.

First, Prove that there is no such real and specifical difference between these two Covenants, as the Objectors suppose, and take for granted that there is.

Secondly, Shew that notwithstanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, should be really and specifically divers the one from the other, yet upon supposal of the truth of what cannot be gainsaid by our Opposers, unless they shall in express terms contradict the Apostle, the second Proposition may be true.

First, For the first of these I shall do two things.

First, Prove that this Covenant, that God entered with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, was a Covenant of Grace, and in particular, that this Promise of that Covenant, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to him and his Seed, was a Promise of a spiritual blessing.

blessing, a good transcending any temporal good whatsoever.

Secondly, Prove that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham*, is the self same Covenant, for the substance of it, made with Believers under the New Testament.

For the first of these I need say but little; because others have said so much: See Dr. Winter in his *Treatise of Infant-Baptism*, as also Mr. Ball upon the *Covenant*, Mr. Warren and others; and therefore in brief take only these three or four Arguments.

The first Argument of that Covenant, as established with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, was not only a temporal or legal Covenant, or the Promises appertaining to his natural Seed, were only temporal Promises, then many thousands, who were the actual Subjects of that Covenant, and the Promises thereof, might and did never enjoy any benefit by it, and that merely through Gods not performing what himself had promised, without any default on their own or their Parents part: But none, who are the actual Subjects of the Covenant and Promises thereof, ever did or could fall short of the good covenanted, merely through Gods not performing what he had covenanted and promised, without a default either of the parties themselves, or of their Parents; Therefore this Covenant, as established with *Abraham* and his natural Seed,

ould not be a meer temporal or legal Covenant, or a Covenant consisting only of temporal blessings, but must needs be a Covenant of Grace, or a Covenant consisting of saving benefits and blessings.

For the consequence in the Major Proposition, that cannot be denied, in as much as many thousands, who were the actual Subjects of this Covenant and the Promises thereof, whether they were so, as they were *Abraham's immediate natural Seed*, or were so, as included with their Covenant-parents, in that phrase, in their generations, might and did die in their infancy, before ever they came to reap and enjoy any temporal benefit, by that Covenant or the Promises thereof. Now this could arise from no other head or spring, but only Gods not performing to them what he had promised: And if it should be said, Though God did deny to give them in that very temporal good contained in the Promises of that Covenant, yet they were infallibly saved, and so had only an exchange of a temporal good for a spiritual; though they had not that particular good covenanted, yet they had a better good, viz. the good of eternal life.

But to that I answer two things:

First, Grant it be so; yet they never had any benefit by this Covenant, or the Promises of it, the actual Subjects of which yet they were, neither could they enjoy eternal life by virtue of that Covenant, or any Promises of it, according

ing to the judgment of our Opposers; in as much as it was , according to their judgment, only a temporal Covenant.

But some will say , Though they had not salvation by vertue of this Covenant , yet all Infants dying in their infancy , before they commit any actual sin, are infallibly saved, and consequently those whose case falls under our present consideration were saved.

I answer, Suppose it should be so yet.

Secondly, I say, That many thousands might live to commit actual sin, and yet die before they come to enjoy any benefit by this Covenant and the Promises thereof, supposing it be only a legal or temporal Covenant, and consequently might not only be deprived of any benefit by this Covenant,meerly through Gods not performing what he had promised to them , but might through their own sin fall short of any higher good, which may be supposed should have been given in lieu of the good of this Covenant. But now for any to fall wholly short of that good promised to them,especially when nothing is given in lieu thereof , meerly through Gods not performing what he had promised to them, is inconsistent with the truth and faithfulness of God, who hath stiled himself, A God keeping Covenant and mercy for ever ; and therefore this Covenant could not, as made to *Abraham's* natural Seed , be a meer temporal Covenant, promising only a temporal good , but must needs be a Covenant of Grace, consisting of

spiritual Promises, as Justification, Adoption, the in-dwelling presence of the Spirit, Life and Glory, &c.

Secondly, If God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham's* natural Seed by this Covenant and the Promises thereof, and to have God engaged by Covenant to a people to be their God, be a greater and more excellent good, than it is to enjoy any meer temporal good whatever, then this Covenant was made with *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, was not a meer temporal Covenant, nor the Promises of it, Promises of meer temporal blessings: But the Covenant was a Covenant of Grace, and the Promises of it Promises of spiritual blessings. But the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition is undeniable, unless any shall affirm, that there may be a good, greater and more excellent, than any temporal good can possibly be, which yet is no spiritual good, or which may be given to men no way interessed in the Covenant of Grace; if any such good can be found out, that excels any temporal good whatsoever, and yet is not a saving good, hath no reference and relation to the salvation of those that enjoy it, they will do something to the invalidating this Argument; till then I shall take it for granted, that no such good is imaginable.

And for the Minor proposition, that is sufficiently evident from that, Gen. 17. 7. compared with Psalm 144. and the latter end: We  
see

see from this Gen. 17. that God did ingage himself, by the Promise of this Covenant, to be a God to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as such, *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed*; which Promise, as hath been proved, respects his natural Seed, as such, as the immediate and next Subjects of it; besides, according to the judgment of our Opposers, the Land of *Canaan* was given to all *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately descending from him by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, setting aside *Esaū* and his posterity, as the proper and special good intended in this Covenant, as respecting them. Now we see plainly, as words can make any thing plain in the world, God ingages by promise, not only to give them that Land, but to be a God unto them, Gen. 17. 8. And that to have God engaged by Covenant, to be a God to any people, is a greater and more excellent good, than any meer temporal good, is evident from that passage of the Psalmist, where, we see, he plainly prefers this good above any temporal good whatsoever; for having spoken of their happiness, who have the enjoyment of temporal mercies and blessings, he adds, as preferring this above all, *Yea, happy is that people, whose God is Jehovah.* Now how could the Psalmist prefer an interest in God above the enjoyment of all worldly felicity, in case it was but a temporal good it self, or a good that only referred to mans temporal happiness and felicity, or had no reference to any higher happiness than the things of the world have? Yea let me say, did this Promise import only a temporal good, their happiness,

happiness, who had God, as their God, by virtue of it , according to the terms upon which it was now given , their happiness, I say, had been rather less than greater than the happiness of those, whose portion wholly lyes in the things of the world ; so that the Psalmist might better have prefixed this *yes* to the happiness of others, than to their happiness, whose God is the Lord , and might have said , Happy is the people whose God is the Lord , yea, happy is the people who is in such a case, in respect of worldly prosperity, as is before expressed.

*Object.* But it may be some will say , This having the Lord engaged to be a peoples God, of which the Psalmist speaks , is meant of their having him engaged as their God by the Covenant of Grace, and not of their having him engaged, as their God, by the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed ; and so it is granted, that to have a covenant-interest in God, is a good, vastly greater and more excellent, than any temporal good whatsoever.

But to that I answer, The Psalmist speaks of a covenant interest absolutely , without distinguishing of the Covenant conveying that interest ; and where the Scripture doth not distinguish, we ought not; and consequently the Scripture preferring a covenant-interest in God above all outward and worldly felicity whatsoever , we may and ought to conclude , there is no covenant-interest , but what doth so vastly excel

excel any temporal good whatsoever ; and consequently, that the interest the natural Seed of *Abraham* had in God , was a good transcending any temporal good , and answerably must needs be a spiritual good ; whence it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant conveying this interest in God unto them , was a Covenant of Grace ; and that this promise was a promise of a spiritual and saving good.

Third Argument , If that Promise of the Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, as such, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a meer temporal good, did yet, according to a more inward sence and meaning of the Holy Ghost in it, intend a spiritual good, typified by that temporal good, then that Promise, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a spiritual good, must needs be understood of that spiritual good, which, according to the letter and outward face of the words, it did intend and point to , and consequently that Covenant must needs be a Covenant of spiritual blessings : but the former is true , therefore the latter. For the Consequence in the Major Proposition of the Pro-syllogism, I suppose, it will not be denied by any that are Masters of their own Reason , if that promise of the Land of *Canaan* , which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the words, intended only a temporal good, (for *Canaan*, according to the letter, was but a tempo-

ral good.) Now if that Promise, according to a more inward sense of the Holy Ghost, intended a spiritual good, surely that Promise, of Gods being a God, which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the word, intends a spiritual good, must needs be understood of that good it did in the letter and outward face of the words intend ; and for the antecedent, that I suppose will be denied, viz: that that promise of *Canaan* did, according to a more inward sense of the Holy Ghost, intend and point to a spiritual good ; but this is so evident, that it doth indeed admit of no contradiction, from those who will not professedly set themselves to oppose the Scriptures : See *Heb. 11. 9, 10.* *He looked for a City, whose Maker and Builder is God.* By what warrant did he look for this City ? Doubtless by the warrant of this Promise of the Land of *Canaan* ; but for this see Mr. Carter, in his *Abraham's Covenant opened*, page 23, 43. See also Mr. Tombs his *Exercitation*, page 2. Now then both parts of the Prostyglogism being true, it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham* and his natural seed, was a Covenant of Grace, or did consist of spiritual Promises ; and in particular, that that Promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, was a Promise of saving Grace,

The fourth Argument, That this Promise of the Covenant in particular, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed,

Seed , as it did respect his natural Seed , as such, did intend and import a spiritual good, or was a Promise, as some speak , of saving Grace, that is, did intend such a spiritual blessing, as had a direct reference to future salvation : I prove thus, *viz.* Because it did, as it doth respect, or was made to *Abraham's* mystical Seed , intend, as is confessed by all, a spiritual good, whence we argue ; If all Promises made in the same words, terms, and expressions to divers persons severally and particularly considered , do alwayes signifie and intend one and the same good , as made to one, that they do as made to another, unless God himself hath some where or some way declared his sence and meaning in them to be divers , as made to one, from what it is as made to another, and this Promise in particular be made in the same words, terms and expressions to *Abraham's* natural Seed , that it is as made to his mystical Seed , and God hath no where or no way declared his sence and meaning in it , as made to his natural Seed, to be divers from what it is, as made to his mystical Seed , then it must needs intend and signifie one and the same good, as made to the one; that it doth as made to the other, and consequently it signifying and intending a spiritual good, as made to his mystical Seed , must needs intend a spiritual good as made to his natural Seed : But the former is true , therefore the latter; That the Promise was made to *Abraham's* whole Seed, whether natural, taking that phrase in the sense before opened, or mystical, hath been sufficiently proved

proved already ; and that it did intend a spiritual good, or was a promise of saving Grace, as made to his mystical Seed, is not denied by our Opposers. Now let it be either shewed where or by what way God hath declared his sense and meaning in it, as it was made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be diverse from what it is, as made to his mystical Seed , or let it be proved, that the Promise made, as before expressed, may carry a sense and signification , as made to one, different from what it doth as made to another : This latter, I judge, will not be attempted , the attempting of it will be but an attempt to raze the foundation of all the comfort of Christians, and whether God hath any where or any way declared his sense and meaning in it, as made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, to be diverse from what it is, as made to his mystical, shall be considered by and by ; in the mean time we may evidently see, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham's* natural Seed, and that as such was a Covenant of Grace , or did consist of Promises of spiritual and saving blessings ; and from what hath been said, it evidently appears , there is no such real and specifical difference between that Covenant made with *Abraham* , and that Believers are under, as this Objection doth suppose and take for granted ; it evidently appears , they are not specifically two Covenants, but *quoad substantiam*, one and the same : Now the foundation of this Objection being removed , the Objection falls to the ground, and hath no weight in it.

Secondly, That this Covenant now made with *Abraham* and his Seed, is one and the same for substance that Believers, under the Gospel administration are under: This I evidence by these two Arguments.

First, If this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed was not disanulled, either by the Law, or by or together with any change or alteration God hath made in his administrations, with reference to his Church in after times, then it was never disanulled, but is still in being, and consequently the same in substance with that Covenant, according unto which God doth dispence and give out his saving mercies and blessings to believing Gentiles in the times of the Gospel: but the former is true, therefore the latter. Certainly it cannot be denied, but that this Covenant is still in being and in force, yea, is that very Covenant, according to which God doth dispence his blessings and mercies to believing Gentiles in the times of the Gospel, in case it was never disanulled, unless any shall say, there is a twofold Covenant of Grace still in being, one a temporal Covenant, another a spiritual Covenant, which is not affirmed by any that I have yet heard of, or met with, and therefore the consequence in the Major proposition will not, I judge, be questioned by any: For the Minor proposition, viz. That this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, was yet never disanulled or abrogated, is expressly declared by the Apostle, Gal. 3. 17. Third say, Brethren,

that

that the Covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disanul, that it should make the Promise of none effect. What Covenant the Apostle here intends is sufficiently evident, as from the foregoing verses, so from the whole context, viz. That Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, as hath been before proved. Now saith the Apostle of this Covenant, the Law which was given four hundred and thirty years after the establishment of it, could not disanul it; and let it be diligently observed, that in case this Covenant had been disanulled either at, or any time before the coming of faith, as the Apostle speaks, that is, at the laying aside the Mosaical Pedagogy, and the setting up the Gospel administration in the room thereof ( and from that time since, sure none will pretend it hath been disanulled ) it had been all one as to the design of the Apostle, as if it had been disanulled by the Law, had it been disanulled at the setting up, yea, or were to have been disanulled during the dispensation of the Gospel, under which we are: The Apostle could no more have proved, that the blessing of *Abraham* was come upon the Gentiles through Christ, as believed in, from the tenour of that Covenant, as we see he doth, then if it had been disanulled by the Law, for if it had not been disanulled by the Law, yet if it had been disanulled at, or consequent to the setting up of the Gospel administration, the tenour of that Covenant had no way proved what

what the Apostle designed the proof of : To what purpose should the Apostle have produced the tenour of that Covenant , to prove the necessity of the Gentiles incorporation into Christ , in order to their enjoying the blessing of *Abraham* , had it been now disanulled , in case it had not been disanulled by the Law ; so that it is past all doubt , that that Covenant was not disanulled , when the Apostle wrote to the *Galatians* , nor was to be disanulled , during the Gospel administration we are now under , and consequently there being but one Covenant , according to which the benefits and blessings of the Gospel , are dispensed unto Gentile Believers , it must needs be this very Covenant afore made with *Abraham* , and his Seed in their Generations , which is the thing to be proved .

Secondly , If believing Gentiles enjoy the saving blessings and benefits of the Gospel , as the Seed of *Abraham* , by vertue of that very Promise of the Covenant made with *Abraham* , and his Seed in their generations ; then the Covenant made with him and his Seed is one and the same for substance with that Covenant , believers are still under ; but the former is true , therefore the latter : It is marvellous how it can enter into the heart of any man , that is master of his own understanding , to imagine , that there should be a real and specifical difference , between that Covenant made with *Abraham* , and the Covenant Believers are now

under, when it is by vertue of the fundamental Promise of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, that they enjoy all the good of the Gospel, or all the saving good they are by Christ made partakers of : Can they be under one Covenant, and yet enjoy all the good they do enjoy by Christ, by vertue of another Covenant, really and specifically divers from that they are under, and which is long since disanulled and abrogated? To affirm it it would be an absolute contradiction : And, that they do enjoy all the good they have by Christ, as they are *Abraham's Seed*, by vertue of this very Promise of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, is so evident throughout this whole discourse of the Apostle, that it needs no other proof, than the bare reciting of his words, see Gal. 3. 29. If ye are Christs, then are ye *Abraham's Seed*, and Heirs according to Promise.

But it may be some will yet object, Certainly, notwithstanding all that hath been said, there must needs be a real and specifical difference between the Covenant that the Jews were under, during the first Testament administration, and the Covenant that Believers are under, during the new Testament administration; for doth not the Scripture expressly call them two Covenants? doth not the new Testament frequently speak of a new Covenant that Believers are now under, in a contradistinction from the old?

To

To that I answer, That when the Scripture speaks of two Covenants, or speaks of a new Covenant established with Believers under the new Testament, it alwayes hath reference to that Covenant, made with the people of *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, and never hath reference to this Covenant made with *Abraham*; the words are as plain as words can be expressed, see *Gal.* 4. latter end, *Heb.* 8.8. Yea, the Scripture is express that the new Covenant is the same that was first entred with *Abraham*; So that, I say, the Covenant of Grace we are now under, is noe another Covenant, specifically different from this made with *Abraham*, but they are for the substance one and the same; and hence this Objection not only vanisheth, but we have an additional confirmation of the truth of what is affirmed in our second Proposition; and we might add,

5. A fifth Argument thus; If the Covenant be one and the same, then the Promises of it must, unless limited by God himself, run in one and the same extent and latitude; but the Covenant is one and the same, and the Promises are not limited by God himself; therefore they must run in one and the same extent and latitude: But the truth asserted is sufficiently evident, therefore I need not enlarge upon it.

I shall come to the second thing proposed in answer to this Objection.

Secondly, Notwithstanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, should be really and specifically diverse the one from the other, yet upon the supposal of the truth of what cannot be gainsaid by our Opposers,unless they shall in express terms contradict the Apostle himself, this second Proposition may be true, and consequently the asserting and maintaining, that the Promise made to *Abraham*, in that latitude and extent, as to take in his natural Seed, as joyn Subjects with him of the same Promise, is given to and settled upon believing Gentiles, in the same extent and latitude, doth not necessarily require the asserting and maintaining the Covenant entred with him, and the Covenant entred with Believers, to be one and the same Covenant: for the clearing up and evidencing of this, let it be observed, that the Apostle doth in express words affirm, That if the Gentiles are Christs, they are *Abraham's* Seed and Heirs, according to the Promise, Gal. 3. 29. Whence it is undeniably evident, that believing Gentiles are Heirs to *Abraham's* blessing, or to the Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, as they are considered under that notion and consideration as his Seed.

Secondly; Which follows from this, that they are Heirs to that Promise, or the blessing contained in that Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, which blessing, as I have proved before, was the same with that which

which *Abraham* himself was blessed with : these two things cannot be gainsaid , but must be granted by all that will not in express terms contradict the Apostle.

Now then let me a little argue with our Opposers thus ; either that Covenant entred with *Abraham*, and entred with believing Gentiles, is one and the same , or they are two Covenants, specifically diverse the one from the other : The first they deny , the latter they affirm. Well then, the Promise contained in it was either a Promise of a meer temporal good , or a spiritual good. Yes, say our Opposers, it was a temporal good , as the Promise was made to *Abraham* , with reference to his natural Seed. Well then the blessing or good contained in this very Promise, as it was made to *Abraham* , with reference to his spiritual or mystical Seed , is either a temporal or a spiritual good ; the latter here must, and I suppose will, be granted by our Opposers themselves : It is evident then, according to the Judgment of our Opposers, that the same Promise made to *Abraham* , with reference to his natural Seed , and as made to him with reference to them , only importing a temporal good, may be given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles , and that by the Covenant of Grace , and that as given to , and settled upon them, may import and signify a spiritual good ; but it is the Covenant of Grace, that is made with believing Gentiles, is agreed on all hands ; that believing Gentiles are Heirs to that Promise made to *Abraham* , with reference to his

Seed , is expressly affirmed by the Apostle ; whence it will undeniably follow , that either the Covenant must be one and the same , and the Promises thereof intend one and the same good , as made both with reference to *Abraham's* natural , and also his spiritual Seed , which is undoubtedly the truth ; or else that the same Promise made to *Abraham* , with reference to his natural Seed , according to that Covenant then entered with him ; and that as so made , with respect to them , may import only a temporal good , may yet be given to , and settled upon believing Gentiles , by another Covenant , and that as given to , and settled upon them , may import a spiritual good ; and consequently that the Promise may run in the same extent and latitude , in which it was made to *Abraham* , as now it is made to believing Gentiles , though the Covenant , in which that Promise was contained , as made to *Abraham* , was really and specifically diverse from that that Covenant , in which that Promise is contained , as made to believing Gentiles ; for if so be the same Promise , as simply and absolutely considered , may be given unto and settled upon believing Gentiles , by a Covenant diverse from that , according to which it was first given to *Abraham* , why may not that Promise be given unto , and settled upon believing Gentiles , in the same latitude and extent in which it was first given to *Abraham* ; If the Promise be given to believing Gentiles , why may it not be given in the full extent and latitude of it ? Certainly no rational account can be given . And here let it

be carefully observed , that both we and our Opposers are agreed, That Abraham's blessing, or the good contained in that Promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to him and his Seed, is granted to believing Gentiles ; all the Question is, whether it be given to them in the same latitude and extent , in which it was given to *Abraham* and his natural Seed ; whence it lyes upon our Objectors to shew some Reason why, supposing there should be such a difference between these two supposed covenants, the Promise may not be continued in the same latitude and extent, in which it was at first given ; as well as the Promise it self, absolutely taken, may be given or continued to believing Gentiles , notwithstanding that difference they imagine between these supposed distinct Covenants, so that the granting the Covenants to be really and specifically diverse one from the other , no more opposeth the truth of this our second Proposition , than it doth oppose what the Objectors themselves do hold , at least which they must hold , unless they will expressly contradict the Apostle in what he expressly affirms : and therefore I say , upon the supposal of what the Objectors themselves must grant, the affirming and maintaining the Promise to run in the same latitude and extent to believing Gentiles , in which it ran in unto *Abraham* , doth not necessarily require the affirming or maintaining, that the Covenant is one and the same : our Opposers must grant , that the Promise made to *Abraham* , either with reference to himself , or

with reference to his Seed , and it is all one, whether we take it the one way or the other, is given to, and settled upon believing Gentiles, we say it is given to, and settled upon them, in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham*, both in reference to himself and his natural Seed : and now supposing the Covenant believing Gentiles are under , should be really diverse from that entred with *Abraham* , how that should contradict what we affirm , more than it should contradict what the Objectors themselves must grant, is impossible to imagine : So that, I say, the Covenant is one and the same for substance ; but supposing it were not , yet our Proposition might and would hold true.

*Object.* It is objected by some, That the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles cannot , with any shew of reason , be supposed to be taken in as joyn Subjects of the Covenant of Grace ; and the Promises thereof , with their Parents, meerly upon the account of their Parents faith, in as much as we see plainly , that the Jews themselves , though they were the natural Seed of *Abraham* ( whose Seed in reason should have enjoyed as great priviledges as the natural Seed of any believing Gentile ) could not upon the meer account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, be admitted into the Gospel-covenant, but for their unbelief were rejected , notwithstanding their relation unto *Abraham* , as his natural. Now say our Opposers, if so be, either the natural Seed of *Abraham* , or the natu-

ral Seed of Believers, had been or were to be received into the Gospel-covenant, together with their Parents, merely upon the account of their Parents faith, and had had, or have, as the Seed of such Parents, a right to the Ordinances and Priviledges of that Covenant, then the Jews, they being the natural Seed of *Abraham*, had had a right to the Gospel-covenant, and might, yea, ought to have been admitted into the Gospel-church by Baptism, by vertue of that their Relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed, and could not justly have been refused for the want of a personal faith and repentance of their own, they being, notwithstanding their want of a personal faith and repentance, yet *Abraham's* natural Seed, and therefore certainly the Jews had either wrong done them by the Apostles, in not admitting them by Baptism into the Gospel-church, or else we must relinquish our plea for Infant-right to Baptism, upon the account of their joynr interest in the Covenant, together with their Parents; for can we think the Apostles would so highly wrong the Jews, as to deny them that priviledge which, as *Abraham's* Seed, they had a right unto? or can it be imagined, that they, though the natural Seed of *Abraham*, who was such an eminent believer, and the Father of the faithful, should have no right to be admitted into the Gospel church, and yet the fleshly Seed of believing Gentiles should have a right to such an admission: And that which makes this Objection seem more weighty to some is, that they suppose we hold, that the Infan-

Infant-seed of believing Parents do stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed, and do baptize them upon that account : And how the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles should be supposed to stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed , and upon that account be baptized, when his own natural Seed could no longer bear the denomination of his Seed , with reference to the Promises of the Covenant of Grace , cannot be imagined, but seems to be matter of great wonder , yea, and amazement unto some.

*Answ.* I answer, What hath been already said, both for the explication of this term *Seed*, and for the removal of some Objections raised up against the truth, asserted in the foregoing Propositions, hath so far obviated and prevented this Objection, as that little more need be added for the removing of it out of our way : The Objection, as we may easily see, is grounded upon , and receives what strength it hath from a twofold Supposition.

First , A Supposition that we affirm, at least that it will unavoidably follow from what we do affirm, that *Abraham's* natural Seed , both immediately and mediately proceeding from his loins, had a right to the Covenant of Grace, and the promises, benefits and privileges thereof, merely by virtue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed.

Secondly,

Secondly, A Supposition that we hold, that the natural Seed of believing Gentiles are, by vertue of that their relation to such believing Parents, accounted for the Seed of *Abraham*, and on that account to be baptised.

Now as to the former of these Suppositions, it will soon appear, to all that attend to what hath been said, that I am no way concerned in it, having affirmed, and I hope sufficiently proved, the quite contrary, viz. That the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham*, did not constitute a Covenant-relation between God and any of his natural Seed, merely as such, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own loins, but that the right and interest that any individual or particular person of his natural Seed, during their Infant-capacity, beyond his immediate Children, had in the Covenant and Promises of it, arose from their relation to their immediate Parents; included with them in that phrase, *their Generations*, and that the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation did necessarily and indispensably require their own faith and repentance, so soon as grown up to a capacity enabling them thereunto, whence, as such; who in their Infancy had a right to, and interest in the Covenant, and Promises thereof, either by vertue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed, thus, in respect of his own immediate Children, or by vertue of the relation to Covenant parents, thus,

thus, in respect of the Jews mediately descended from *Abraham*, during the first Testament administration ; I say, as such, might, when grown up to years of maturity, fail in the performing the conditions of the Covenant , and thereupon be rejected of God ; so they having lost their own Covenant-state and relation, could not convey a right to , or interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof to their Children, their Childrens Covenant state and relation standing or failing with their own ; whence it is evident, that as neither the Jews themselves , as grown up, and as Parents, had any right to the Covenant, as administered under the first Testament, but what depended upon their personal acceptance and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as then proposed to, and administered among them , nor their Infant-seed any right of admission into a participation of the benefits and blessings of the Covenant , as then administered , but upon a supposition of their immediate Parents abiding in Covenant ; so now the continuance of their right ( considered as grown up and as Parents ) to the Covenant and blessings thereof , as now varied and altered in its administration , depended upon their acceptation and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as now proposed under this present administration , and as the continuance of their own right to the Covenant , and the privileges thereof, depended upon their own acceptation and performance of the Covenant , as now administered , so their Childrens right

right to, and interest in the Covenant, and privileges thereof, stood or fell with their own; and hence the Jews, as grown up to years of maturity, or as Parents, refusing to accept of and perform the Conditions of the Covenant, as now differently administered under the New Testament, from what it was under the Old, were personally rejected, supposing them single persons, and were both themselves and their Children ( supposing their Children were in their Infancy ) rejected from their standing any longer in their former Covenant-state and relation God-ward : So that this Supposition having no footing in any thing I have hitherto said, the Objection it self, so far as grounded upon it, no way concerns the truth asserted in the one or the other foregoing Propositions, and consequently I am not at all concerned to reply unto it.

Now for the other Proposition this Objecti-  
on is grounded upon, I acknowledge my self  
concerned in it, and do freely grant, yea, posi-  
tively affirm, That the Infant-seed of believing  
Gentiles are to be accounted of, and numbered  
among *Abraham's* mystical Seed : what respect  
we have to that their mystical relation to *Abra-  
ham*, as his Seed, in the application of Baptism  
to them, will be more fitly considered under the  
last Proposition : But that they are to be ac-  
counted of, and numbered among *Abraham's*  
mystical Seed, I affirm, and it sufficiently appears  
from hence, viz. That *Abraham's* Seed in their  
gen-

generations make up but one mystical Seed; This is evident from Gen. 17. 7. where saith the Lord , I establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their generations, to be a God to thee, and thy Seed after thee : So that Seed in their generations is expounded by God himself to be, Seed after thee ; Seed in their generations makes up that one Seed : and to the same purpose is that of the Apostle, in Gal. 3. 16: He saith not, To Seeds, as of many, but, To thy Seed, which is Christ.. Whence it appears, that all the individual and particular persons, whether grown up, or Infants, that are included in that Promise , as made to Abraham, with reference to his Seed , make up but one Seed, which, saith the Apostle, is Christ. Now that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles , under the Gospel administration, as well as the Infant-seed of the Jews , under the first Testament administration , are included with their Parents in that phrase , Thy Seed in their generations , hath been abundantly proved already : so that I say I grant, yea affirm, that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles are to be reckoned of, and numbered among Abraham's mystical Seed.

**Object.** 1. First , That the Scripture still makes Faith the condition, or medium, of Gentiles becoming Abraham's mystical Seed , Rom. 4. 12,16. Whence it seems evident, that Abraham is a mystical Father to none but Believers, and his Seed are only such as are of the Faith.

**Ans<sup>n</sup>.**

*Answ.* I answer, The Scripture is not contrary to it self: Now we have seen, that under that phrase, *Thy Seed in their generations*, the Infant-seed both of Jews and Gentiles are included; and that this, *Seed in their generations*, is but *Abraham's Seed after him*: Whence it is evident, the Apostle in saying, that *Abraham is the Father of them that believe*, excludes not, but on the other hand includes the Infant-seed of such as do believe, as to be accounted with their Parents, as making up but one Seed; he is the Father of them that do believe, whether Jews or Gentiles in their generations.

*Object.* 2. Secondly, It is objected, That then we make three parties in the Covenant.

First, *Abraham*.

Secondly, *His Seed*.

Thirdly, *Their Infant-seed*.

*Answ.* In answer, We make but two parties, *Abraham*, and his Seed, the Infant-seed of Believers makes not a third party, but stands in the same capacity, respectively to *Abraham*; that their Parents do, and he is to be looked upon as a common Father to Parents, and their Infant-seed, the several individuals, whether Parents or Infants, are all but the several members or parts of that one *status*, that one collective body, *Abraham's Seed*: from all it appears, that this Objection, in part, concerns not me, and so far as it doth concern me, is no way opposite to what I have affirmed, but is granted

granted without the least prejudice to the truth pleaded for.

**Object: 3.** It is objected by some, That Infants cannot be under the Covenant of Grace, because the Covenant of Grace promiseth divine teachings to all that are under it, the issue of which is the saving knowledge of God, which as Infants for the present are incapable of; so it is certain, that many of the Infants of Believers are never made partakers of; now if they are admitted into Covenant, and are actually under the Promises of it, they must needs be taught of God, and that so as to know him, at least they would, as they grow up to a capacity, be so taught of God; see the Promise, Isa. 54. 15. Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 10.

**Ans<sup>w</sup>.** I answer, This Objection hath been removed already, but yet for further satisfaction I shall lay down these two Propositions.

a. First, That some may be actually in the Covenant of Grace, who yet are not so taught of God, as savingly to know him: this might be evidenced from that distinction formerly laid down, concerning an external and internal being in Covenant: It is possible, persons may be, yea, it is certain many are, externally in Covenant, who are not internally in Covenant; the necessity of this distinction hath been already shewed, and the absurdities that would follow, in case it should be denied, declared. Now in respect

respect of such who are only external in Covenant, it is certain, though they are in Covenant, and under the promises of it, according to its true tenour, as so externally made, yet are not so taught of God, as savingly to know him, for then they would be, not only externally, but internally in Covenant.

Secondly, That this Promise made to the Covenant-people of God, assuring them, that they shall be all, from the least to the greatest, taught of God, so as savingly to know him, doth not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person, to whom the promise, as externally promulgated and declared, doth, in common with others appertain.

And for the proof of this Position I would argue thus, If it do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person to whom it doth externally appertain, it must be either by virtue of the universality of the terms, or by virtue of the nature and kind of the promise it self, or by virtue of the nature or quality of the good promised. That it is by virtue of the nature or quality of the good promised none can pretend, and that it is neither of the former wayes I shall prove distinctly.

First, That it cannot be by virtue of the universality of the terms in which the promise is express, is evident thus, because indefinite promises may be, and many times are express in universal terms; and then, though the terms be

universal, yet the promises may not be made good to every individual person, to whom, in common with others, they do appertain; *If I be lift up, saith Christ, I will draw all men to me, John 12. 32.* The terms are universal, yet the promise is an indefinite promise, he would draw many unto him. So again, *Acts 2. 17. I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh:* where we see again the terms are universal, yet the promise is verified only in some particular persons.

But here you will say, In this place the promise is express with a peculiar emphasis, *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest;* and therefore it must needs be understood universally.

To that I answer, Whether we understand this phrase, *From the least to the greatest,* of age, or state, or condition, is not much to our present purpose; we find the very same phrase used, when yet the sense is only indefinite, thus, *Jer. 6. 13. From the least to the greatest, every one is given to covetousness;* which yet was not universally true of every individual person among that people, whether Infant or grown person, nor of every individual grown person, it only notes the mighty, and almost universal corruption of that people in point of Covetousness. So that every individual person, externally in the Covenant of Grace, and so in common with others, having this promise appertaining to them, shall be savingly taught of God, so as truly to know

know him, cannot be inferred, or certainly concluded from the universality of the terms it is express'd in.

Secondly, Nor from the nature of the promise; for if the nature of the promise do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person in covenant, as before express'd, it must be either, as it is a conditional, or as it is an absolute promise; as it is conditional, it cannot be pretended, in as much as no conditional promises, as such, do infallibly secure the good promised to any to whom they do appertain; it is possible the condition may not be performed, and then God is disengaged from making good the promises.

It is true, you will say, supposing it were a conditional promise, it would not infallibly secure the good promised to all universally, to whom it doth appertain; but it is an absolute promise, and the absoluteness of the promise, taken in conjunction with the universality of the terms, doth sure infallibly secure the good promised to all universally to whom it doth appertain.

I answer, That the promise, though here express'd absolutely, yet is not absolutely absolute, as before proved; so though express'd in universal terms, yet may be and is an indefinite promise; indefinite promises being often express'd in universal terms; yea, let me say, that absolute pro-

mises ; how universally soever their terms are, are yet to be alwayes understood in an indefinite notion, and the good promised is not infallibly secured to any individual or particular person, meerly by the promises themselves, but only upon supposition of the eternal purposes and decrees of God, to give the good so promised to this or that particular person : in respect of absolute promises , God hath reserved a liberty to himself, to give or withhold the good promised, in a commensurableness to his eternal decrees and purposes, and according as particular persons are elected and appointed to the enjoyment of the good promised , or not elected or passed by.

From all it evidently appears , that persons may have a visible and external actual right and title to this promise , and yet never have the good promised in present possession, nor yet ever have it made good to them, and consequently it cannot be concluded from the absoluteness or universality of this promise , that the Infants of believing Parents are not in the Covenant of Grace, nor under the promises of it.

But let that suffice for our second subordinate Proposition.

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## CHAP. IX.

The third subordinate Proposition laid down; how handled declared. The first Argument for its confirmation proposed and prosecuted, where that Command, concerning the keeping of the Covenant, Gen. 17. 9. is largely spoken to.

**I** Come now to the third and last subordinate Proposition, viz.

That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations, ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptized: all that are the Subjects of that Promise are the due and proper Subjects of Baptism: There may be, its true, a tender of the Promise to such who ought not to be baptized, they may refuse that tender, but to whom the Promise doth actually belong, the Ordinance of Baptisme ought, according to the will of Christ, to be applyed.

This Proposition I shall endeavour to prove in hypothesis, or as applied to the particular subject of our main Proposition, viz. the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents; and thus supposing, and taking it for granted ( as being already proved ) that they are the actual Subjects of that Promise, I shall prove that they ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptised, and that by these three Arguments,

First, If it be the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-seed, as joyn Subjects with themselves of that promise, be also baptized, then it is according to the will of Christ, that not only believing Parents themselves, but their Infant-seed also should be baptized: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition is unquestionable, what a Believer is bound to take care be done, the doing of that must undoubtedly be according to the will of Christ.

But 'tis the Minor proposition will be denied, viz. That it is the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-Seed, as joyn Subjects with themselves of the same promise, be baptized.

But the truth of this is evident from the express Command of God, Gen. 17. 9. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.

Now

Now that it may appear, that this Command doth constitute it to be the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-seed be also baptized, I shall distinctly speak to these five things.

First, That by Covenant in this place is mainly, if not only meant, the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping the Covenant, the application and reception of that Token.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, alwayes had, and was to have a Token annexed to it.

Thirdly, That this Command requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token applyed to themselves, or themselves to receive and bear it, but to apply or take care that it be applyed, according to divine appointment, to their Infant-seed.

Fourthly, That as Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant during the old Testament administration, so Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New.

Lastly, That this Command doth equally and alike oblige believing Parents in their Generations, respective to Baptism, the present

Token of the Covenant, as it did the Jews, respective to Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant.

For the first, That is past all rational doubt evident; God himself shews what he intended by Covenant, and what by keeping of that Covenant: When he applyes this Command, as more generally laid down to *Abraham* and his natural Seed in particular, verse 10. So verse 13. *My Covenant shall be in your flesh*, plainly declaring, that by Covenant he intended the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping of this Covenant, the application and reception of that Token, though not affirming Circumcision to be the only Covenant to be kept, and consequently not limiting the Command to it.

And here let us a little inquire into the sence and meaning of this term *Token*; the Hebrew סַמִּךְ is usually translated by the Seventy σημεῖον, both the Hebrew and Greek signifie, *Signum tam nudum quam prodigiosum*, a sign both ordinary and prodigious, and so is exprest by the Apostle, Rom. 4. 11. σημεῖον ἔταξε μετόπις and Sign or token here we are to take in a pure logical notion, and thus we may define it with Austen, to be, *Id quod seipsum sensui & preter se aliquid animo representat*: Or as a later Author, *Signum est quod seipsum sensibus & id cuius signum est intellectui aufert*: A Sign in this logical notion is, that which is obvious to, or perceivable by sence, and through the medium

of fence presents to the mind or understanding what it is a sign of : Whence it is evident , that this term, *Token or Sign*, is not expressive of all the uses or ends that the Token of the Covenant here commanded was designed or appointed to : the term abstractly taken, only expresses the general nature and design of that Ordinance , but expresses not the various uses and ends it was in particular appointed to ; what these uses and ends are, must be gathered from other Scriptures, wherein God himself hath declared them , of which I shall speak when I come to the fourth Particular.

But let that suffice in brief for the first particular to be spoken to.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, always had, and was to have a Token annexed to it ; that is, it had, and was to have an outward Ordinance or Institution annexed unto the administration of it , which though of various uses , and serving to various ends, not expressly declared in that term *Token*, abstractly taken, yet might be denominated the Token of the Covenant. This is evident two wayes.

First, *A priore*, from the Command of God, injoyning *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations to keep it.

Secondly, *A posteriori*, or *de facto*, from the actual

actual institution and appointment of such a Token.

For the first, Let the words in Gen. 17. 9. be diligently observed , *And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.* Now God would never have injoynd *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep his Covenant, that is, the Token of it, had he not intended to annex a Token to it. And observe it , the Command lyes on *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, without any limitation, and consequently is iincumbent upon *Abraham's* Seed, while he hath a Seed upon earth. Hence it is evident , that as God intended to annex a Token to that Covenant, then entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed , so he intended to annex a Token to his Covenant ( whether the same, or another , it is all one as to our present purpose ) into which *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, viz. believing Gentiles, in after Ages should be received ; we see the Command lyes upon *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations unlimit-edly.

Now Believers under the new Testament , as hath been proved, are *Abraham's* Seed, and con-sequently must needs lye under the Obligation of this Command, whence there must needs be a Token annexed to the Covenant into which they are received , for otherwise they would lye under an Obligation to keep the Token of the Covenant, and yet have no Token appointed them

them by God, to keep which would be absurd : And that this Command is obliging to Abraham's mystical or spiritual Seed , is evident by this Argument.

The same persons intended in the Promises of the Covenant, are intended in the Command, injoyning the Token : But Abraham's mystical Seed, as well as his natural Seed, are intended in the Promises ; therefore they are also intended in the Command.

We evidently see, the Promises and the Command run in one and the same extent and latitude ; *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, to be a God to thee and thy Seed after thee*, there's the Promise : *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations*, there's the Command.

Now if God hath not limited the Command to some of Abraham's Seed , then we must not do it : But God hath no where limited the Command to some of Abraham's Seed ; therefore must not we.

If any should say, He hath limited that Command.

Let that limitation be produced , and it shall suffice ; till then we shall conclude, the Command is of an equal extent with the Promise.

Now

Now there being a Command incumbent upon *Abraham's* whole Seed mystical, as well as natural, to keep the Covenant, that is, as God himself expounds it, the Token of the Covenant, there must needs be a Token to be kept.

Secondly, This is evident, *de facto*, for the Covenant under the first Testament administration that will not be denied, and for the Covenant under the new Testament administration, the truth of what I affirm will appear, when I come to shew that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant.

And therefore thirdly, That this Command, requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto themselves, or themselves to receive and bear it; but also to apply or take care that it be applyed to their Infant-seed. The truth of this will again appear two wayes.

First, From the Letter of the Command, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed in their Generations.* Now under this phrase, *thy Seed in their Generations*, both Parents and their Infant-seed are included; they are both included in the Promise, as hath been already proved, and therefore must needs be both included in the Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. Hence, that the Covenant be

be kept by the Seed as well as by the Parents themselves, is according to the express letter of the Command; which duty of keeping, as to be performed by the Infant-seed, can only intend their reception and bearing of it; and so far the Infant-Seed as well as the Parents are under the Obligation of the Command: hence an Infant, not receiving or bearing the Token of the Covenant; is said to have broken the Covenant, verse 14. because the Infants as well as the Parents are under the Obligation of the Command to keep the Covenant.

Now if so be the Covenant be to be kept, not only by Parents, but by their Infant-seed, it will undeniably follow, that Parents are to take care that it be kept by them, in as much as they, as such, are incapable of taking care of it themselves, the care must lye upon some body, and upon whom, if not upon their Parents? We see that God hath throughout the Scripture made it the duty of Parents to take care of, and see to the performance of his will relating to their children, as might be evidenced in variety of instances were it needful.

Secondly, The truth of this appears from the clear and express discovery that God made of his mind and will as to Circumcision, the ancient Token of the Covenant, and thus as God enjoyned the token of the Covenant to be applyed to the Infant-seed of Covenant-parents, so he imposed the care of the application of that Token unto the Seed upon the Parents, Every man-child

*child among you shall be circumcised, verse 10.*  
*He that is eight dayes old, shall be circumcised among you, verse 12.* The Child in the application of the Token was passive, and though upon whom the care of the application of the Token to the Infant seed was laid, is not expressly declared in this place, yet that it was upon the Parents is sufficiently evident throughout the Scripture. We see how angry God was with Moses, when the circumcision of his Child was neglected; and in that God so fully declared his mind in respect of Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant, it is a full comment upon the Command, as more generally laid down, viz. That as in that phrase, *Thy Seed in their Generations*, he intended both Parents and Infant seed; so that the care of the Childs receiving and bearing the Token of the Covenant (which is the whole of its keeping of it) did appertain to the Parents as their duty.

And hence let it be observed, that the will of God concerning Circumcision, shews us what is his will concerning Baptism, that as the one, so the other should be applyed to the Infants of believing Parents, as well as to the Parents themselves, and that the care of the application of the one, as well as of the other, lies upon the Parents.

Where note, that I argue not from Anallogy, but only take that discovery God makes of his will concerning Circumcision, as a comment upon that Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant, as more generally laid down.

But not to inlarge upon this , by what hath been said the truth of the third particular sufficiently appears .

Fourthly, That as Circumcision was the Sign or Token of the Covenant,during the old Testament administration , so Baptism is the Sign or Token of the Covenant under the new Testament administration. Where note, that when I say , Circumcision was, and Baptism is , the Sign or Token of the Covenant , I would be thus understood, viz. that Circumcision was ; and Baptism is , that Ordinance or Institution that God then did annex, and now hath annexed to the Covenant, serving to, and performing of those various uses and ends, with reference unto those to whom it was, and is to be applied, that he proposed to himself, as the reason and ground of his annexing a Sign or Token in the general to the Covenant established between himself and *Abraham* , and his Seed in their Generations.

That Circumcision was this Ordinance or Institution , is expressly declared , *Genesis 17. 10, 11.*

That Baptism is the present Sign or Token of the Covenant will appear these two wayes.

First, More generally, and thus : Unless Baptism be the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, the Covenant, during this present administration , is left wholly destitute of any Sign or

or Token at all ; let the Sign or Token be produced in case Baptism be not it.

'Tis true, it may be it will be said, That the Covenant under , the present administration , hath no external Sign or Token annexed to it, neither is it necessary that it should ; the Spirit is the Seal of the Covenant of Grace , and the more plentiful powrings forth of the Spirit upon Believers , especially under that notion of a Seal, makes an outward Sign or Token wholly unnecessary.

### To that I answer :

First, That though Believers are said to be sealed with the Spirit, yet the Spirit is no where called the Seal of the Covenant, neither indeed can it in propriety of speech be so called ; for if the Spirit were the Seal of the Covenant, it should be given to all that are under the Covenant , the contrary thereunto both Scripture and experience abundantly declare , the Seal of the Covenant must be as extensive as the Covenant whereof it is the Seal. Now take the Spirit as a Seal, that is, as given for that particular use and end, *viz.* to assure and ascertain the Subject recipient of it , of the good promised in the Covenant , and so it is certain he is not given to every one truly and internally in covenant for a long time , nor to some possibly while they live. How many live many years, and it may be at last dye without any sensible assurance of their covenant-state , or injoyment of

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the good promised ; so that the Spirit cannot properly be called the Seal of the Covenant ; he is rather ( as I may so express it ) a private Seal given by God to this or that particular Believer, according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Secondly, I answer, That to seal and assure to those who are admitted into covenant with God , their injointment of the good promised is not the only use and end, with reference whereunto the Sign or Token of the Covenant is appointed.

Hence suppose it should be granted , that the Spirit is the Seal, yea, the only Seal of the Covenant of Grace , yet that doth no way oppose the truth of what we here affirm concerning Baptism , for though it should be not of that particular use , nor appointed for that special end which yet it is, as will appear by and by, yet it may be the Sign or Token of the Covenant, it may be of those other uses, and serve to those other ends that God did propound to himself, as the reason and ground of his annexing a Sign or Token in the general, to the Covenant ; so that it is certain, the Spirit cannot be rationally supposed to be that Sign or Token of the Covenant , which *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations were enjoyned to keep; and consequently, for ought what is said of the Spirit, unless Baptism be the present Token of the Covenant; it is wholly destitute of any Sign or Token at all, which that it cannot be , hath been

proved already : as for the Lords Supper, I suppose, none will ever imagine that that can be the Token here enjoyned, if they should, their vanity will easily appear.

Secondly, This will more clearly appear, if we compare Baptism with Circumcision , the former Token of the Covenant; that Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant is unquestionable ; and hence look what Ordinance under the new Testament doth most fully agree with Circumcision , in regard of the uses and ends, which, as the Token of the Covenant, it was appointed for, and did serve unto, that must needs be the Ordinance designed by our Lord Christ, for the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision : And here for the evidencing what is affirmed, I shall do these two things.

1. Instance in some of the more especial uses and ends whereunto Circumcision was appointed, and whereunto it , as the Sign of the Covenant, did serve.

2. Shew the exact agreement of Baptism with Circumcision , in regard of those uses and ends: Where let it be carefully observed , that it is no way necessary for the proving Baptism to be the present Sign or Token of the Covenant , that I should prove an exact agreement between it and Circumcision in all circumstances , nor yet in regard of all the uses or ends of the

the one and of the other ; if it be evident, that their agreement be such as will evidence Baptism to be the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision, it is enough as to my present purpose, and that may be sufficiently evident by their agreement in some things, though they should disagree in others, especially there being no other Ordinance that can with any shew of reason be pretended to be that Token, the application and reception of which is here enjoyned *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations ; a little may suffice to prove, that Baptism is that Ordinance, when there is no other Ordinance that can, with any shew of probability, be supposed to be it.

I shall therefore only instance in a fourfold use and end, whereunto Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was appointed, and whereunto it did serve ; and then shew the agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in regard of those uses and ends. The first and two last I shall do little more than mention, and a little insist upon the second.

First, Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was the solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Jewish Church, and by the reception of which they became actual Members of that Church ; and consequently was that solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were incorporated in, and united to the mystical Body of Christ as visible : The proving of

this, I suppose, is needless, 'twill surely be denied by none. And therefore,

Secondly, Circumcision was to seal and assure to the Subjects of it, their enjoyment of the good things, benefits and blessings promised in, according to the true tenour of, the Covenant, to the administration of which it was annexed : See this in a particular Instance, viz. Remission of sin, or the Righteousness which is of Faith : Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, that is, it did seal and assure, to the due Subjects of it, the non-imputation of their sin, or the imputation of righteousness to them, upon condition of their Faith. Thus it is said of Abraham, *He received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised,* Rom. 4. 11. The Apostle here shews us one special use and end of Circumcision, respective to all to whom it was duly applyed.

*Object.* But here it is objected, That to have Circumcision a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, was a privilege peculiar to *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, and was not of that use, nor appointed for that end, to all to whom it was rightfully applyed : therefore it is said, *He received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the Father of all that believe.* And hence it may seem, that he receiving Circumcision under that notion and consideration, upon a reason and ground peculiar and

and proper to himself , the privilege was peculiar and proper to him , and not common to any other with him, there not being the same reason and ground of their receiving of it under the same notion and consideration.

To that I answer two things.

First , Those words, *That he might be the Father of all them that believe* , depend not only upon the words immediately foregoing , but upon the tenth verse taken in conjunction with the former part of v. 11. he did not only receive Circumcision as a Seal, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, but he both had righteousness imputed to him while in uncircumcision , and also received the Sign of Circumcision as a Seal, that he might be the Father of them that should believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised : So that he did not receive Circumcision, as a Seal of the righteousness of faith, upon any reason peculiar and special to himself, any more than he had righteousness imputed to him, upon a reason peculiar and proper to himself: And consequently , upon the same account that our Opposites appropriate circumcision as a Seal of the righteousness of faith to *Abraham* himself , and deny it to be of the same use to his Seed, they may appropriate the imputation of Righteousness through Faith and Circumcision it self to him alone, and deny that any of his Seed had Righteousness imputed unto them , or ought to have been circumcised.

Secondly, I answer, That the Apostle here rather speaks of the *finis cui*, than the *finis cuius* of Abraham's receiving Circumcision as a Seal: My meaning is this, *Abraham* received circumcision as a Seal, not barely for the sake of that relation of his being a Father of them that should believe, as it was a good benefit or privilege to himself, but he received it under that notion and consideration, *In eorum gratiam qui credituri sint*, for their sake to whom he should sustain the relation of a Father: And so the meaning is, He received the Sign of Circumcision as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, not barely that he might sustain the relation of a Father to all that should believe, as that was a good to himself, but that he might as a Father, or common person, be a pattern to all that should sustain that relation of Children to him, in regard of the good which they, as his Children, should receive.

Now then having removed this Objection, I shall offer two or three Arguments to prove, that Circumcision was appointed for this use and end. viz. to seal and confirm the whole Covenant to all to whom it was, according to the will of God, to be applyed.

The first shall be taken from the end of Abraham's receiving of it, as here declared by the Apostle: And thus I argue, If *Abraham* received Circumcision, as a Seal of the Righteousness which he had through Faith, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of a pattern

pattern to all that being circumcised should believe , then to all that, being circumcised, did believe, their circumcision was and, ought to be looked upon and improved by them, as a Seal of that Righteousness they had through Faith : But the former is true, therefore the latter. For the Consequence in the Major proposition , I suppose, that will not be denied, it being past all rational doubt , that if *Abraham* received Circumcision under that very notion and consideration as a Seal, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of, might be a pattern to all that, being circumcised, should believe as he did : Then look of what use it was to him , or to what end he received it ; it must needs be of the same use , and appointed for the same end unto them , to whom he was a pattern as receiving it. And therefore 'tis only the Antecedent that can be questioned, which yet is so evident , that to understanding and unprejudiced persons the proving of it may seem wholly superfluous. That *Abraham* received Circumcision under this very notion , as a Seal of the righteousness which he had through faith , that he might be the Father of all them who being circumcised did believe , is expressly affirmed by the Apostle ; all that can be doubted of is , whether he was, in regard of the use and end of it , as received by himself , a pattern to all to whom he was a Father : But now this is undeniable,in as much as his paternity or fatherhood, as I may so speak, in part, if not principally, consisted in his being a pattern and example to

all to whom he was a Father. This title of a Father is in a peculiar and special manner given to , and predicated of *Abraham*, in this very regard, that he was set up as the great pattern, according to which God would act towards, and deal with, all that should after believe; or be admitted into a covenant-relation with himself : Hence in this very place the Apostle tells us , that faith was reckoned to *Abraham* for righteousness, which is all one as to say, righteousness was imputed to him through faith , when he was in uncircumcision , that he might be the Father of the uncircumcised , that righteousness might be imputed to them also, viz. according to the pattern set in *Abraham* himself.

So again, Gal 3. 7. Even as *Abraham* believed God , and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Mark , the design of the Apostle is to prove, that righteousness is through faith, from the first pattern set in *Abraham*. Now sayes he, verse 7. Know ye therefore, that they which are of the faith are the children of *Abraham*; and then closes, verse 9. So then they which are of faith , are blessed with faithful *Abraham*; that is, as they are blessed with him with the same blessings, so they are blessed with him after the same manner, viz. through faith. Now as *Abraham* had righteousness imputed to him through faith , that he might be the Father of all that believe, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the imputation of righteousness : So he received Circumcision as a Seal of that

that righteousness , that he might be the Father of them that should believe of the circumcision, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the use and end of Circumcision, which both he and they in common received : So that it is evident, that Circumcision was of that use, and appointed for that end, viz. to be a Seal of the righteousness of faith , not only to *Abraham* himself, but to all his Seed, during the continuance of that institution.

Secondly , That Circumcision was of this use, and appointed for this end, with reference to the temporal benefits promised in the Covenant, is evident from hence, because it could be of no other use , nor appointed for any other end, with reference to some of them. Hence I argue, If Circumcision had some reference to the temporal good things promised in the Covenant , it was annexed to , and could have no other reference or respect but as a Seal, assuring the injoyment of them , then that must needs be its use and end, with reference to those good things promised : but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition cannot be denied, for if Circumcision had some reference to the temporal good things promised in the Covenant, and it could have no other reference, but as a Seal or Sign assuring the injoyment of them , then that must needs be its use and end respective unto them , this will not be denied.

Secondly,

Secondly, For the Antecedent , that consists of two branches.

First, That Circumcision had some reference to, or was of some use , and appointed for some end, respective to the temporal good promised ; this is evident from the indefiniteness of the expression, *The Token of my Covenant* ; 'twas the Token of the Covenant absolutely taken , not of some part of the Covenant , but of the whole Covenant, and therefore must needs in its use and end have some reference to the whole good promised in the Covenant : But this, I suppose, will be granted by our Opposers, they generally affirming, that the special, if not the only use and end of Circumcision , did refer and relate to the temporal part of the Covenant, or to the Covenant as it was a temporal Covenant,

And therefore secondly, That it could have no other reference, or could be of no other use, with reference to these Promises, but only this, viz. To seal or assure the injoyment of the good promised : Take it of the Land of Canaan ; for what use, and to what end could Circumcision be instituted , respective to that Promise , but to seal or assure the injoyment of the good promised, upon condition of the observation of the Articles of the Covenant ? Whence the Conclusion is undeniable, : So that, I say, Circumcision was the Seal of the whole Covenant, we see it :

First, In respect of the spiritual good promised, as pardon of sin, the righteousness of faith.

Secondly

Secondly, In respect of the temporal good promised ; and that Circumcision did seal the temporal part of the Covenant, is not only evident from Scripture and Reason, but is the general acknowledgment of our Opposers themselves ; therefore I shall take it for granted, and upon that Supposition infer a third Argument, to prove that it was of that use, and appointed for that end, *viz.* To be a Seal, or an assuring Sign of the whole good, whether temporall or spirituall convey'd, and made over by the Covenant, and consequently was a Seal of the Covenant absolutely taken. And therefore,

Thirdly, If Circumcision, as the Token of the Covenant, was a Seal of some Promises contained in it, then it was a Seal of all the Promises of it : But the former is true, therefore the latter.

That this Covenant, now entred with *Abraham* and his Seed, was a spiritual as well as a temporal Covenant, or did consist of spiritual as well as temporal Promises, hath been already proved, Now that Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant, is expressly affirmed by God himself, *This is the Token of my Covenant* ; and that as the Token it was of that use, and appointed for that end, with reference to the temporal part of the Covenant, hath been before proved, and is granted by our Opposers, and therefore must needs be of that use, and appointed for that end, respective to all the Promises of the Covenant : *Ubi lex non distinguit*

*non distinguendum est,* Let any reason be shewed why it should not be a Seal, or an assuring Sign, of the spiritual part of the Covenant, as well as of the temporal part, till which be done, the indefiniteness of its reference to the whole Covenant, express by that indefinite phrase, *The Token of my Covenant*, is an undoubted warrant to take it, as of the same use, and appointed for the same end, respective to all the Promises of the Covenant, that it was to any : from all we see, that Circumcision was a Seal, or an assuring Sign or Token ; and that's the second use and end of Circumcision, the former Token of the Covenant.

Thirdly, The use and end of Circumcision was, to oblige and ingage the person receiving of it to keep exactly to the Articles of this Covenant ; hence is that passage, *Jer. 4. 4. Circumcise your selves to the Lord :* But this, I suppose, is granted on all hands, I shall not at all stand upon it.

Fourthly and lastly, The use and end of Circumcision was, to be a visible badge, to distinguish the people of God from all other people, and to be a visible Sign of their covenant-relation, or to be a Sign, whereby they did visibly appear to belong to God in Christ, in a contradistinction from the rest of the world.

Secondly, That Baptism doth agree with Circumcision, in regard of these uses and ends,  
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is sufficiently evident , and consequently must needs be the Sign and Token of the Covenant here enjoyned, since the laying aside of Circumcision : Let us see it in the particulars.

First, For the first use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* Its being that solemn Rite and Ordinance, by which persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Church , or mystical Body of Christ , as visible : That Baptism is of this use, and appointed for this end, is expressly declared by the Apostle, *1 Cor. 12. 13.*

Secondly, For the second use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* to assure the party, to whom it was applyed , of the injoyment of the good things , benefits and blessings promised in the Covenant. That Baptism is of this use, is sufficiently evident from that passage of Peter , *1 Pet. 3. 21.* where Peter having spoken of the salvation of Noah and his house in the Ark,sayes he, *The like figure whereunto Baptism now saaveth us* , and telleth us how it saaveth, both negatively and positively ; negatively, it is *not by wash-ing the body from its outward filth*, but positively, by giving or effecting the *answer of a good conscience towards God*, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. What the Apostle means by this answer of a good conscience , Interpreters are not agreed , neither doth it concern my present purpose to determine; that which I only intend is , that by the resurrection of Christ, through a right use and improvement made of Baptism,

Baptism , a believing Soul comes to have a good conscience , that is, an acquitting conscience. Now what use or improvement can be made of Baptism, in order to the cleansing and purifying the conscience , by means whereof it becomes good, as the Apostle speaks, but as it is looked upon, and applyed as a Seal, or an assuring Sign, sealing and assuring to the Soul the remission of sin, through the purchase of Christs death, as declared valid and effectual by his rising from the dead : this use and end of Baptism is also clearly implied and held forth in the Apostles Exhortation to those trembling Jews , *Acts 2. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, οἰς ἀπόντας αἰρεσθαι, for or unto the remission of sin.* Now under what notion or consideration doth the Apostle exhort to Baptism, respective to remission of sin ? It cannot be under the notion of a proper cause, for Baptism is no proper cause of the remission of sin , neither is it so much as a necessary condition, as Faith and Repentance in the adult are; for then none could receive remission of sin without it ; but that is false, as is evident in the case of the Thief upon the cross, and the like is the case of many others:, who are converted immediately before death. Neither doth he exhort to it barely under the notion of a Sign, that phrase , *οἰς αἴρεσθαι*, implies some reference that Baptism hath to remission of sin, beyond what it would have , were it only *nullum Signum*, a bare Sign or representation of the remission of sins by the blood of Christ , and

and therefore he must needs exhort to it under the notion of a Seal or assuring Sign : And for the further clearing up of this, let the case and condition of these trembling Jews be considered, as they had sinned in crucifying of Christ, and were under the guilt of that sin , and under an Obligation to suffer deserved punishment , so they were under a deep sence of that their sin, and that wrath or punishment due to them upon the account thereof. Now as the Apostle exhorts them to repent ( with which a saving faith in Christ must be supposed to concur ) with a direct reference to their obtaining remission of sin, *in foro Dei* ; so he exhorts them to be baptized , with a peculiar reference to the pacification of their consciences , that they might not only have remission of sin in the Court of Heaven, but have that remission sealed and confirmed to them , to the quieting their afflicted consciences , or to the working in them good consciences : But that is a second use and end of Baptism.

Thirdly, For the third use and end of Circumcision , viz. To oblige and ingage the persons to whom it was applyed, to a due and faithful performance of all consequent duties required in the Covenant. This is true also of Baptism ; Baptism is not only a sealing or confirming Sign, but an obliging Sign, by it the person baptized is obliged to take God in Christ for his God, and give up himself to him, in universal and constant obedience to his will : This is clearly

clearly held forth in that Proposition *eis*, Baptism is said to be, *τὸν ἱωάννην τὸν ὄντα, Into the Name of the Father*, Matth. 28. 19. *eis Christum, Into Christ*, Gal 3. 27. But this, I suppose, will be granted on all hands, I need not stand upon it.

Fourthly, For the last use and end of Circumcision, *viz.* To be an outward Sign or badge of that covenant-relation the Soul was taken into with God in Christ; whereby the person was known and taken notice of, as visibly belonging unto God, as one of his covenant-people. This again is true of Baptism; hence those that are baptized are said to put on Christ, *Gal. 3. 27. As many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ*, they visibly appear as Members of his mystical Body, as contrasted from the non-baptized; from all it evidently appears, that Baptism is indeed that Ordinance, appointed by our Lord Christ under the new Testament, serving to, and performing of those uses and ends, with reference unto which, a Sign or Token in the general was annexed to the Covenant established between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations. But let that suffice for the fourth particular.

Lastly, That this Command doth alike oblige believing Gentiles, respective to Baptism, that it did the Jews, respective to Circumcision. As it obliged the Jews, during that first Testament

ment administration, to be circumcised themselves, and see that their Infant seed were circumcised with them; so it doth still oblige believing Parents to be baptized themselves, and see that their Infant-seed be baptized with them: This is evident from the consideration of two things in the Command.

First, The extensiveness of it; it reaches *Abraham's Seed in their Generations*, as we have afore proved.

Secondly, The applicability of it, as more generally laid down to Baptism, as well as to Circumcision: And for the clearing up of this, let it be carefully observed, that the Command obliging *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, meaning as before noted, the Token of the Covenant, did not at all intimate, much less determine, what that Token should be; it only constitutes the general duty of *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, respective to the Token of the Covenant, whatever that should after be determined by God himself to be: the words are plain and express, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations;* not thou and thy Seed shall be circumcised or baptized, but thou and thy Seed in their Generations shall keep the Covenant: Hence the Command, as thus generally laid down, obligeth no more to the application or reception of Circumcision, than to the application or reception

of Baptism, and indeed to neither of them, simply and absolutely considered ; it only enjoyned the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant, but did not determine what that was, or should be ; and had God only thus generally and indefinitely commanded the keeping of the Covenant , without specifying what this Covenant should be , for *Abraham* himself to have been circumcised , or to have circumcised his Seed, had been a Sin and an act of will-worship : but now when God had determined Circumcision to be the then Token of the Covenant, this general Command was to be applyed by him to that institution in particular , and his receiving of it himself , and applying it to his Seed, was warranted, yea, enjoyned by this Command ; so then that particular institution of Circumcision was laid aside , and Baptism instituted for the same uses & ends: that Command was no longer to be applyed to Circumcision, but unto Baptism set up in the stead of it ; and doth equally oblige Christians to the application and reception of Baptism, as it did the Jews, during the first Testament administration , to the application and reception of Circumcision ; the command only enjoyning the observation of the Token of the Covenant , not determining what that was or should be ; as it enjoyned of it self neither Circumcision nor Baptism , so it enjoyned both the one and the other, as they were determined by God to be the Token of his Covenant ; so that we have as an express command, comparing this command with that, *Mattb.*. 28. 19. for baptism

baptisme of Infants , as the Jews had for the circumcising their Infant-seed ; The command to keep the Covenant lying upon *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations, which, as I have said, as it enjoyned Parents to receive or have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto them, and unto their Infant-seed , so it constituted it to be a duty of the Infant-seed of Believers , to receive and bear the Token as applyed unto them. So that what would we have more, indeed what can be more plainly spoken : would we have had God said , thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations. Circumcision before the Messiah come , and Baptism after.

I, you will say, had it been so exprest it would have prevented this controvertie.

But to what purpose should it have been so exprest ? Is it not all one , *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed in their Generations* , not determining what Covenant should be kept , and then for God first to institute Circumcision as the Token of the Covenant, and then lay that aside, and substitute Baptism in the room of it; the command still remaining in its full force , without the least intimation of a repeal: is not the command still legible, and is it not plain enough, it lyes upon *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations ? And is it not evident , that believing Gentiles are *Abraham's Seed* ? And is it not plainly exprest , that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant, as Circumcision of old was ? So that if we will

not call for a command, and when it is brought shut our eyes against it, here we have as an express command for the baptism of the Infant-seed of believing Parents , as the Jews had for the circumcising their Infant-seed.

But yet for the further explanation , illustration and confirmation of what I have in this particular asserted, let two things be observed.

First, How the Lord doth vary the phrase, when he comes to specifie the Covenant then to be kept ; 'tis not said, This is my Covenant which thou and thy Seed in their Generations shall keep , but, *This is my Covenant which ye shall keep between me and you , every man-child among you shall be circumcised , and you shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin, and it shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you,* verse 10, 11. So again verse 12. *He that is eight dayes old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your Generations.* A plain intimation, that he purposed a change in the Token of the Covenant, and that Circumcision should continue the Token of it only during the first Testament administration , while the Covenant it self was to be continued in an especial manner in *Abraham's* natural loin and posterity.

Secondly, Let it be observed, That this Command stands not alone in regard of this interpretation we have put upon it , but hath its parallel: there are other commands in the old Testament,

Testament that must be necessarily interpreted and understood after the same manner.

I shall give you a twofold instance in the commands of the Moral Law.

First, Take an instance in the second Commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image.* Now will any say, that this Command is only negative, doth only prohibit gross Idolatry, according to the letter of the command. Surely 'tis agreed on all hands, that it requires something positive, viz. That the external worship that God himself appoints, be exactly observed and performed, according to the way and manner himself hath determin'd in his Word; and thus when God had appointed and established that worship, consisting in sacrifice, observation of dayes, and the like, in and by which his people, under the first Testament, were to worship and serve him, that command was to be applied to that kind of worship, and did require the exact observation and performance thereof, according to the way and manner declared by God himself. But now then that kind of worship was laid aside, and other Ordinances and Institutions appointed, in and by which the people of God were and are to worship and serve him: the Command is of alike authority as before, and doth alike oblige and bind the people of God, to the exact observation and performance of that worship now established, according to the way and manner declared in the Word, as it did oblige and bind the peo-

ple of God, under the first Testament, with respect to the worship then established : Though there be an alteration and change made in the particular Ordinances and Institutions , in and by which God will have worship tender'd up to him ; yet the Command, as more generally laid down , as requiring the exact observation and performance of whatever worship is of Gods own institution , is of the same authority and force that ~~ever~~<sup>then</sup> it was ; though it doth not oblige us generally to the same acts of worship that it did oblige the Jews unto , yet it equally obligeth us to those acts and duties now prescribed by God, as it did the Jews to that worship prescribed unto them : The Command, as more generally proposed , doth not specify any paticular acts or duties , in and by which God would be worshipped , it only requires in the general, that whatever act or duty God himself appoints, be exactly observed and performed, and that according to the way and manner declared by himself : the very same is the case of this Command , injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. The Command, as I have said, as thus generally proposed, specifies not what that Covenant is or should be , only requires the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant , and consequently to Circumcision, when that was appointed as the Token of the Covenant, and during its continuance ; but upon the cessation of that, to Baptisme, as that Ordinance which God hath declared to be the present Token of the Covenant.

Secondly,

Secondly, Take another Instance in the fourth Commandment, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Here is a Command more generally laid down, injoining the keeping holy the Sabbath or rest-day, not specifying which day should be that rest-day. Now when the Seventh day was instituted as that day of rest, this general Command was to be applyed to that particular day , and did require the keeping of that day holy ; but when the Seventh day was laid aside, and another day, viz. The first day of the week , instituted by Christ as that rest day ; now that Command , as so generally proposed , is to be applied to this particular day , and equally obligeth us Christians to the keeping holy the first day of the week , as it did the Jews to keep holy the seventh ; hence we have no express command in the new Testament for the keeping holy the first day of the week , neither is there any need there should that command, to remember the day day of rest, and keep it holy, being equally applicable to one day as to another , and God having determined the day, the command is to be applyed unto it as so determined by God ; which again is the very case of this command, under consideration ; it determines not the Covenant to be kept , but requires that the Covenant , whatever God determines it to be, be kept , and consequently as it first obliged to the application and reception of Circumcision , so now it obligeth to the application and reception of Baptism.

Now then to come to a close of this first Argument, we see the Promises are true, and consequently the conclusion is certain, namely, That it is the will of Christ, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents should be baptized.

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CHAP.

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## C H A P. X.

*The second and third Argument, for the confirmation of the last subordinate Proposition, proposed and managed. The several Instances of Households being baptized, considered.*

*The second Argument.*

If the Infant-seed of believing Parents were in primitive times baptized , either by the Apostles themselves, or by any others by their allowance, direction, or approbation,then it was or still is according to the will of Christ, that they should be baptized : But the former is true, therefore the latter. The consequence in the Major proposition will be readily granted on all hands. That which alone needs proof is this, viz. That the Infant-seed of believing Parents were in primitive times, either by the Apostles themselves, or by others, by their allowance, direction or approbation baptized. For the confirmation of which this one Argument may suffice.

If the Infant seed of believing Parents were by the Apostles owned and looked upon, as appertaining to , or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ,as visible, then they were,either by themselves,or by others, by their allowance, direction

dire&tion and approbation , admitted and im-  
planted into that Body by Baptism : But the In-  
fant-seed of believing Parents were owned and  
looked upon by the Apostles , as before expres-  
sed : Ergo , &c.

Here again the Consequence in the Major  
proposition will be, I suppose, readily granted  
by our Opposers, and 'tis sufficiently evident by  
this Argument.

If Baptism was appointed by Christ , for the  
solemn admission of such into his mystical Body,  
as visible , as did appertain thereunto , or were  
Members thereof , and there was no other way  
or means appointed for the same end and pur-  
pose, then all that the Apostles did own and look  
upon, as appertaining to, or as Members of that  
Body, were, either by the Apostles themselves,  
or by others, by their allowance, dire&tion and  
approbation, admitted and implanted into it by  
Baptism : But the former is true , therefore the  
latter ; the Minor here alone needs proof , and  
that consists of these two branches.

- First, That Baptism was appointed by Christ,  
for the solemn admission and implantation of  
such into his mystical Body, as visible, as did  
appertain thereunto , or were Members there-  
of.

Secondly , That there is no other way or  
means appointed by Christ for that end and  
purpose:

First, For the first , see 1 Cor. 12. 13. For by  
one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, whe-  
ther we be Jews or Gentiles , whether we be bond

or free , and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. What may be objected from this Scripture against the baptism of Infants, shall be taken notice of by and by. All that I cite it at present for is, to prove, that Baptism was appointed by Christ , for the solemn admission of persons into his Body, as visible, which is sufficiently evident.

Secondly , That there is no other way or means appointed by Christ , for the solemn admission of any into his visible mystical Body : If any shall say there is , let them shew it and prove from Scripture what they affirm , and I shall readily grant the invalidity of this Argument ; but that doubtless none will attempt to do, so that the truth of the Major proposition is unquestionable,

For the Minor, viz. That the Infant-seed of believing Parents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible , This will be denied , and therefore must be proved, and I shall prove it by these two Arguments, both which being grounded upon express and positive Scriptures, will render the addition of more wholly needless.

First, All those who were by the Apostle owned and looked upon, and that as personally or particularly considered, as the actual Subjects of the Promise of Salvation , were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ , as visible : But the Infant-seed of believing Pa-

rents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles , and that as personally and particularly considered, as the actual Subjects of the Promise of Salvation ; therefore they were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ , as visible.

The Minor proposition hath been already proved ; and as for the Major, that is evident thus, Christ is the Saviour of his body, *Ephes. 5. 23.* Now to be under a Promise of Salvation, is to be under a Promise of being saved by Christ : hence all that are under a Promise of being saved by Christ, must needs appertain to, or be of his mystical Body , for 'tis of his Body that he is the Saviour.

But two things will be objected.

*Object.* 1. First, That Christ is said to be the Saviour of all men, *1 Tim. 4. 10.* To be the Saviour of the world, *John 4. 42.* and therefore though it should be granted , that the Infant-seed of believing Parents are under the Promise of being saved by Christ , it will not follow, that they were looked upon as appertaining to, or as Members of his mystical Body.

*Answ.* To that I answer, that though Christ in a large sense may be , and is in Scripture said to be the Saviour of all men, and the Saviour of the world, yet no particular or individual person is actually, and that for the present, as personally considered under any Promise of being saved by him, ( especially taking Salvation of spiritual and

and eternal Salvation ) but such who are of, or do appertain to his mystical Body : therefore it is said of these *Ephesians*, before their embracement of Christ, *They were strangers to the Covenants of promise*, Ephes.2.12, They had nothing to do with the Promises of spiritual and saving Mercies ; and as they were strangers to the Covenants of promise , so they were without hope , without any grounded hope , interest in the Promises being the alone true ground of all hope of spiritual and eternal Salvation : so that interest in the Promise of Salvation, declares the persons so interested, to appertain to, or to be of the mystical Body of Christ, all others being strangers to the Promises, and therefore without hope.

*Object.* 2, Secondly, It is objected , That when it is said, Christ is the Saviour of his Body, it is only meant of his mystical Body, as invisible, and consequently , in case this Scripture will prove, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents, as having the Promise of Salvation appertaining to them , do appertain to the mystical Body of Christ, it will prove, that they do universally appertain to his Mystical Body , as invisible, which it will be said we our selves deny , and therefore this Scripture is impertinently brought to prove their relation to the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, which only speaks of his mystical Body, as invisible.

*Answ.* To that I answer , This Objection will receive a more full answer by and by, where I shall meet with it again; at present I shall only say,

say, 'tis evident the Apostle speaks of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, and not meerly as invisible ; for let it be observed , that Body and Church, in this discourse of the Apostle, are Synonimies , or words exactly answering one another in sence and signification : whom he intends by Body he intends by Church , and so on the other hand, whom he intends by Church he intends by Body : Now this Church or Body of Christ , of which he is said here to be the Saviour , was that Church or Body, of which the *Ephesians* were an homogeneal Part, that is,a part of the same kind with the whole ; hence the Apostle speaks of them , as joyn Members with himself of this Body, verse 20. for we are Members of his Body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Mark, he takes in the *Ephesians* universally and indefinitely, one as well as another , as joyn Members with him of this Body: So Epbes. 2. 19. Now therefore ye are no longer Strangers and Forreigners , but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. To be fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, is all one with being of this Church or Body. Now it is evident, the Apostle did not suppose, that every individual person of this Church were Members of the invisible Body of Christ ; what he saith, *Acts* 20 30. plainly declares the contrary. Now then this Church or Body , of which the Apostle saith, Christ was the Head and Saviour, being that Church or Body, of which the *Ephesians* were an homogeneal part , and they not being

being supposed by the Apostle universally to appertain to the Church or Body of Christ, as invisible; It will undoubtedly follow, that he doth not speak of the Church or Body of Christ merely as invisible, but as visible. Christ is in Scripture said to be the Saviour of his Church or Body, as visibly considered, and the Infant-seed of believing Parents being under a Promise of Salvation by him, or of being saved by him, they must needs by the Apostles be owned and looked upon, as Members of that Body of which he is the Saviour, none, as I have said, being under a Promise of being saved by him, but such as do appertain to that Body, of which he is the Saviour.

Secondly, All those who under the Gospel administration, and that as personally considered, are the actual Subjects of that Promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, as visible: But the Infant-seed of believing Parents under the Gospel administration, and that as personally considered, are the actual Subjects of that Promise; therefore, &c.

The Major is undeniably proved, by that positive Assertion of the Apostle, *Galatians 3. 16. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he saith not, to his Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Christ; that is, Christ mystical.* Now if that Promise were made

made to Christ, and to Christ only, as we see the  
 Apostle denyes it to be made to any other , it  
 was not made to Seeds, but to Seed,to thy Seed,  
 which, saith the Apostle, is Christ. I say, if this  
 Promise was made only to Christ , it will unde-  
 niable follow, that whosoever that Promise was  
 made unto , or to whom that Promise may by  
 Scripture-warrant be applyed,as the actual Sub-  
 jects of it , and that as personally considered,  
 they must needs by the Apostles be looked upon  
 and owned, as appertaining to, or as Members  
 of the mystical Body of Christ ; and therefore  
 let none evade this plain evidence, to the deceiv-  
 ing themselves or others, by saying, that there  
 are Promises made to others, that are not Mem-  
 bers of the mystical Body of Christ. Let it be  
 remembred , the Argument speaks not of Pro-  
 mises in the general, nor of any kind of Pro-  
 mises, but of this Promise in special ; nor doth it  
 speak of this Promise, as an indefinite Promise  
 made to any sort or species of persons,collective-  
 ly taken , where no single or individual person  
 can be said to be an actual Subject of it, as per-  
 sonally considered ; and therefore to produce  
 any such Instances is wholly impertinent : as  
 to the Argument in hand, let it be shewed, that  
 any person, whether old or young, might ac-  
 cording to Scripture be accounted an actual  
 Subject of this Promise , and that as personally  
 considered , who yet was not by the Apostles  
 owned or looked upon,as appertaining to,or as a  
 Member of the mystical Body of Christ , till  
 which be done,which I shall not doubt to affirm

is impossible to be done ) we may undoubtedly conclude, that all those that are the actual Subjects of that Promise , as personally considered, were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ, which is the thing affirmed in our Major proposition. For the Minor proposition, viz. That the Infant-seed of believing Parents are, under the Gospel administration, such Subjects of that Promise ; this hath been already fully proved ; whence our Conclusion is undeniable, That they were owned and looked upon by the Apostles , as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical Body of Christ.

*Object.* But it will be said, That by Christ here we are to understand Christ mystical , as invisible , and not as visible. The Promises are made to Christ, that is, to the real and internal Members of his mystical Body.

*Answ.* To that I shall answer these two things.

First, *Ubi Lex non distinguuit, non distinguendum est*, Where the Law distinguisheth not we are not to distinguish. Now the Apostle tells us , the Promises are made to Christ ; not to Christ, either under this or that notion or consideration ; here is no distinction between Christ, as visible or invisible, but simply and absolutely, the Promise is to thy Seed, which is Christ.

But you will say, Though the Apostle doth not here distinguish, yet the Scripture elsewhere warrants

warrants that distinction ; and it is certain, the Promises do not really appertain to any , but such as have a real union with , and interest in Christ, of whom his Body, as invisible, is constituted and made up , therefore we are to understand the Apostle, as intending only the invisible Body of Christ.

To that I answer, It is granted, that in order to a due application of this or any other Promise to our selves , and in order to our enjoyment of the good promised , we must not only look to a visible profession of Christ, which constitutes us of his Body, as visible, but we are to look to the reallity of our union with , and interest in him. But yet let it be carefully observed, that the Scripture presumes and takes it for granted, that as to particular persons, those who do visibly belong to Christ, are of his Body, as invisibly, as well as visibly considered : Hence in all that it speaks to, or of the Body of Christ, it speaks to or of it, simply or absolutely, as his Body , without distinguishing of it as visible or invisible. And let it be further carefully observed, that that distinction of Seeds intimated by the Apostle, whereof some have the Promises made to them , and others not , doth not respect the Members of the Body of Christ, as visible , as though some of them had the Promises made to them , in a contradiction from others, visibly of the same Body, who have not the Promises made unto them, but the distinction is either between such , who might plead an interest in the Promises as related to Abraham, as his

his natural Children, who yet cleaved to the Law for Righteousness and Life : Or between such , who though in word they did profess Faith in Christ, yet did indeed fall in with, and imbrace such doctrines and practices as did, *ipso facto*, forfeit and disanul their right of membership in the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, and such who did visibly adhere and cleave to Christ in faith and obedience, in opposition to the embracement or falling in with any such doctrines or practices. Now the Apostle affirms, that to these, and not to those, the Promise was made. Indeed this I shall readily grant, that the holy Ghost would have all to know, that if any, while they keep up a visible profession of Christ, and of adhearing alone to him in faith and obedience , should yet act short of , or contrary to that their profession , it was not their mere profession that would give them the actual possession of the good promised , they must act according to their profession , otherwise though the Promises, as externally promulgated and declared, are made to them, and they in *foro Ecclesiæ* had a right to them, yet it was none of the intendment of God , that upon the terms of a bare profession they should enjoy the good promised ; but this I say, that the Promises, in respect of the external promulgation and declaration of them , are made to Christ mystical , without consideration had to that distinction of visible and invisible , the Holy Ghost speaking to or of men , by men speaks according to what visibly appear of them.

But secondly , I answer , That Christ here must needs be understood of Christ mystical , as visibly considered : This hath been touched upon already , and for further satisfaction , see Mr. Cobbett in his *Just Vindication*, page 57. and it evidently appears from hence , because particular and individual persons might ordinarily be known to appertain to , and be Members of Christ , as here spoken of by the Apostle. Now no individual or particular person can be ordinarily known to appertain to Christ , or to be a Member of him , as invisibly considered ; see verse 28. where saith the Apostle , *Ye are all one in Christ* ; the Apostle speaks to the *Galatians* , and saith he , *Ye are all one in Christ* ; and in saying they were all one in Christ , he must needs acknowledge them to be all in Christ ; how could they be all one in Christ , unless they were in Christ ? But sure none will suppose , that the Apostle did infallibly know them , to have been universally every individual person among them of the Body of Christ , as invisible , therefore he must needs speak of Christ here as visible , and not merely as invisible ; and besides , let the foregoing Arguments , to prove that the Infant-seed of believing Parents , and that as such , are included as the actual Subjects of this Promise , be well weighed , which supposing it to be true , it will undeniably follow , that the Apostle here speaks of the mystical Body of Christ , as visible , in as much as the Infant-seed of believing Parents may then be ordinarily known to appertain to Christ , as here spoken of by the Apostle.

And therefore whereas our Opposers affirm, That Christ here is to be understood of Christ mystical, as invisible, and thereupon conclude, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents cannot, as such, be supposed to appertain unto Christ, and consequently not included as Subjects of that Promise, said by our Apostle to be made unto Christ.

We on the other hand affirm, and I hope have sufficiently proved, that they are included as joyn't Subjects with their Parents of that Promise, and upon that ground ought to be looked upon as appertaining to Christ, and consequently that by Christ here we are to understand Christ mystical as visible, and not meerly as invisible.

Now unless our Opposers shall produce clearer evidence, that the Apostle doth indeed speak of the mystical Body of Christ, meerly as invisible, then hath been produced, to prove the Infant-seed of believing Parents, and that as such, to be included in that Promise, we shall take it for granted, that he speaks of Christ as visible, & that the Infant-seed of believing Parents do appertain to, or are Members of his mystical Body as visible, and consequently, *Quod erat demonstrandum*, were either by the Apostles themselves, or by some others, by their allowance, direction or approbation, admitted and implanted into that Body by Baptism.

Now as a close of this Argument, it may not be altogether unseasonable to shew in a few words ( it needs not many ) what respect we

have to that mystical Relation , wherein the Infant-seed of believing Parents stand towards *Abraham*, as his Seed,in the application of Baptism unto them , the consideration of which I afore referred to the handling of this last Proposition , and I know not where to touch upon it so seasonably as here.

And for this let it be noted , that in the application of Baptism we have a direct and primary respect to their state , as joyn Subjects with their Parents of the Promises of the Covenant, the Covenant and Promises thereof being entred with, and made unto *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, as with and to the Parents personally considered, so with and to their Seed, as such : Hence both Parents and Seed are to have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto them , they being joyn Subjects of the same Covenant and Promises , they are alike to partake of the Sign and Token of the Covenant : Hence look what respect we have to the mystical Relation of believing Parents to *Abraham*, in the application of Baptism unto them, the same respect we have to the mystical Relation of their Infant-seed to *Abraham*, in the application of Baptism unto them.

The third Argument: If interest in that grand Promise of the Covenant , wherein God engaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations ; be alone and by it self a sufficient ground, upon which persons may and ought to be exhorted and moved unto Baptism,

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then all those , who have an interest in that Promise, may and ought to be baptized : But interest in that Promise is alone and by it self a sufficient ground , upon which persons may and ought to be exhorted and moved unto Baptism : Therefore all those, who have an interest in that Promise , and consequently Infants they having an interest in it , may and ought to be baptized.

The Consequence in the Major Proposition of this Prosyllogism cannot be denied ; for if a Minister may exhort or move one to be baptized upon this sole ground , that he hath an interest in that Promise , he may and ought to apply Baptism to him upon that sole ground ; otherwise persons might be duly exhorted to a duty, which would be unlawful for them to practice, which would be absurd.

Therefore 'tis the Minor only which, I suppose, will be denied, which yet, I judge, will be granted by the major part of our Opposers ; and for the satisfaction of others , let these two Scriptures be compared together, and well weighed, Gen. 17. 9. Acts 2. 38, 39. saith God to Abraham, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed in their Generations:* saith the Apostle, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sin, for the Promise is to you and to your Children.* Now let it be diligently observed , how the Holy Ghost grounds the Command or Exhortation to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of the Covenant, upon interest in , and right to the Promises of the

Covenant , I will be thy God , saith the Lord to Abraham , and the God of thy Seed in their Generations , thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore , thou and thy Seed in their Generations . Now to what end or purpose can it be imagined , that the Command to keep the Covenant should be ushered in with a therefore , had not the Command some reference to the Promises immediately afore proposed ? And what reference can it be imagined to have but this , that Gods vouchsafement of these Promises was the ground and foundation of the Command ? The Command was given upon no other account or consideration , but their interest in the foregoing Promises , and the use the thing commanded should be of to them , respective to these Promises , so that I say , the Command is grounded upon their interest in the Promises ; having these Promises , Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant : In like manner the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism , the present Token of the Covenant , or enforceth it by the consideration of right to , and interest in the Promise , be baptized , for the Promise is unto you : And that the truth of what we affirm may more fully appear , let us enquire into two things .

First , What Promise it was the Apostle saith was unto them .

Secondly , What the meaning of the Apostle is in these words , The Promise is to you .

First, For the first, And thus the Promise here said by the Apostle to be unto them, must needs be some Promise, which is common to all that are called of God, and yet peculiar and proper to them and their Children: hence it could not be either the Promise of sending Christ, or the Promise of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit; for as the former is not proper and peculiar to such as God calls, so the latter is not common to them all, and therefore it must needs be either that grand Promise of the Covenant, or some other of the essence and substance of the Covenant, as remission of sin, or the like, which is all one as to our present purpose.

Secondly, For the second, And thus I suppose all parties must necessarily and answerably do concenter in one of these two interpretations, either that the Apostles meaning is, that the Promise was to them, so as that they had a present actual and personal interest in it, which seems most agreeable to the letter of the words; or else that at present the Promise was to them only, by way of offer and tender, but would be unto them, so as that they should have an actual and personal interest in it, upon the Lords calling of them, or which is all one, upon their repentance; and that the Apostle doth eye and intend their personal interest in the Promise, either as at present, according to the first sense of the words, or future, to be obtained by their repentance, according to the latter, is evident; because otherwise the having of the Promise

to them, would have been no sufficient ground for the Apostles Exhortation to Baptism, neither could he rationally make it a motive to them to be baptized ; so that according to the latter interpretation of the Apostles words, 'tis as if he should say , the Promise is to you by way of offer and tender at present , therefore repent, whereby you shall have an actual interest in it, and thereupon be baptized ; and that the Apostle exhorts to Repentance only , and not both to Baptism and Repentance , in order to their having an actual interest in the Promise, is past all doubt,in as much as Baptism must necessarily follow upon , and not precede interest in the Promise,as a means either by it self, or as a joyn<sup>t</sup> means with Repentance,to obtain that interest ; so that, I say, his meaning must be this , repent, that you may have an interest in the Promise, and upon your repentance be baptized for the remission of sin , for then the Promise is to you, that is,you then will have an actual right to, and interest in it : So that take the meaning of the Apostle which way you will , it is all one as to my present purpose , in as much as he grounds his Exhortation to Baptism upon actual interest in the Promise , or makes that the motive to excite and stir them up to Baptism : now interest in the Promise being the ground upon which,or the motive by which the Apostle presseth them to Baptism , it must needs be a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism ; and consequently whoever hath an interest in the Promise may duly and rightly have Baptisme applyed unto them.

Object.

*Object.* But it will be objected, The Apostle conjoyns Repentance and Baptisme in his Exhortation, and therefore they cannot be separated in practice.

*Answ.* 1. To that I answer two things.

First, That though the Apostle conjoyns these two duties in his Exhortation , yea, though he should ground his Exhortation to the practice of them both upon the same foundation, *viz.* interest in and right to the Promise ; yet that doth not necessarily imply an inseparable connexion between them in practice , two dutes may be conjoyned in an Exhortation , and both moved to upon one and the same ground , and yet be separable in their practice, and then either of these duties may be pressed to and answerably practiced apart upon that ground , let us see it in these two duties of Repentance and Baptism, exhorted to by the Apostle : it is evident the Apostle exhorts to these two duties , with reference to two distinct ends ; the one, *viz.* Repentance , with reference to their obtaining an actual interest in the Promise, suppose that were wanting, or with reference to the removal of a special bar, which at present lay in the way of their Baptism, supposing them to have a present interest in it : The other, *viz.* Baptism , with reference to the confirmation of their faith in, or their assurance of their enjoyment of the good promised, upon supposition of a precedent interest in the Promise. Now when these two ends are separated , as in respect of many they may be , sometimes Repentance may and ought

to be pressed to and practised , when Baptism is unnecessary , as in case of a Believers falling into sin after Baptism : So on the other hand , Baptism may be exhorted to and practised , when yet Repentance , or the profession of Repentance , is no way necessary , as in the case of Christs Baptism ; so in *John Baptist's* case , supposing him , he being sanctified in the womb , to have kept up the due exercise of Grace and Holiness from his infancy : Now in these cases these two duties are inseparable in practise , and in such cases either of them may be distinctly and severally pressed to upon this ground : what is a sufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation upon to the practise of two duties , must needs , supposing these duties are inseparable in their practise , be a sufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation to either of them apart upon , so that though these two duties are conjoyned by the Apostle in his Exhortation , and both exhorted to upon one and the same ground ; yet they being separable in practise , either of them may be exhorted to , and practised upon that ground , according to the case and condition of the parties concerned in them : whoever hath an interest in the Promise , in case of the commission of any sin , may be exhorted to repentance upon that sole ground of his interest in the Promise ; so whoever hath an interest in the Promise , may and ought to be exhorted to Baptisme , upon that sole ground of his interest in the Promise ; an Exhortation to both taken either conjunctively or severally , may be

be rightfully grounded upon the persons interest in the Promise.

Hence secondly, I answer, Let it be granted, that the Apostle exhorts those trembling Jews to repentance, as a necessary prerequisite to their Baptism, yet that was only either in order to the confirming, continuing, and visibly manifesting their precedent interest in the Promise, or removing that special bar, that lay in the way of their Baptism, 'twas their interest in the Promise that was the proper ground upon which the Apostle exhorts them to Baptism; Repentance is no further necessary unto Baptism, than as it is a part of the condition of interest in the Promise, and an external discovery of that interest to the Administrators of Baptism, as in the case of persons afore unconverted, or for the removing some special bar lying in the way of Baptism, as in case of Believers fallen into sin afore the application of Baptism unto them; in case interest in the Promise may be known, when Repentance is not upon such accounts incumbent as a duty, that is, a sufficient ground upon which to move unto and apply Baptism: And that which strongly persuades us to judge, that the Apostle exhorts to Repentance, not as simply and absolutely necessary to Baptism, at all times and in all cases, but only as necessary in their special case, and in cases parallel with theirs, is not only his grounding his Exhortation to both these duties, upon one and the same ground, thereby plainly declaring their rightful practice, as conjunctively, when the case so requires, so separately,

rately, or each apart by themselves, when either of them is not necessary or practicable by the parties concerned in them upon that sole ground ; but the whole reference that Baptism hath to the Promise, or the Souls interest in it! Baptism hath no necessary reference unto Repentance as already performed , so as its antecedency should be indispensably required , in order to a right application of it ; neither hath repentance any necessary reference to Baptism, so as that Baptism may not be administred , but upon supposition of its antecedency, as we see in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ , and John Baptist , as before noted ; but Baptism hath a direct reference to the Promise , and the Souls interest in that ; and therefore when repentance is required as a necessary prerequisite to Baptism, it is only upon some of the accounts before mentioned ; 'tis interest in the Promise that the Apostle grounds his Exhortation to Baptism upon, and consequently interest in the Promise is a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism.

Now that the Infant seed of believing Parents have a right to, and interest in that promise, hath been already proved, and receives no little confirmation from this Text of the Apostle , *The Promise is to you, and to your Children:* but my design is not, *Actum agere*, to do that which others have done already : I shall therefore only say , that suppose it might admit of a doubt, whether Children here are to be taken , *qua* Children , as the Children of such Parents as these

these the Apostle speaks to , or whether their right to the Promise doth not suppose their personal calling : I say, though this might admit of a debate , taking this Scripture abstractly in it self ; yet comparing this Scripture with the evidence before given , that the Promise runs in that extent and latitude , as to take in Parents and Children, surely it is past all rational doubt , that Children here are to be taken as the Children of such Parents , *the promise is to you and to your Children as they are your Children*. But having so fully proved this, I shall add no more at present.

Fourthly, To add strength to the foregoing Arguments, let us take in those several Instances recorded in the new Testament , of whole Households being baptized upon the faith or conversion of one or both Parents : That, together with the Parents, upon their faith, their respective Households were frequently baptized, is in the new Testament fully declared : See *Acts 16. 14. 15.* so also verse 33. of the same Chapter , *1 Cor. 16. 16.* touching all which Instances let these three things be observed.

First, That it is very probable, if not fully certain, that at least some in or of some of these Houses, said to be baptized , were baptized not upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance , but upon the account of their Parents Faith. For the clearing up of this I shall premise three things.

First, That under this term *House or Household*, we must comprehend and take in all the natural Children that were, at least, then present, of these Parents , whose Houses are recorded to be baptized, we must take the Holy Ghost, according to the literal and proper sense of his words , where there is no necessary Reason ; as here there is not , otherwise to understand him.

Secondly, That these Houses or Households may be rationally supposed to be considerably great ; these phrases, *Households, all his*, and the like , note only a bare plurality of persons, but that they were in some measure numerous.

Thirdly, That not only Infants as new born, or in their infant-state, but such Children, who had arrived to a higher state of childhood , or were grown to some years of maturity, must yet be rationally supposed to be baptized, not upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their Parents : and the Reason is evident , because such Children cannot be rationally supposed to be capable of attaining to, in an ordinary way, a competent measure of knowledge in the Mysteries of the Gospel in so short a time, as did intervene between the Parents embracement of the Gospel and their own, and their Houses Baptism : And the Spirit of God, in his ordinary way of working , works according to the capacity of the Subjects he works in and upon .

*Unum quodque recipitur secundum modum recipientis*

pientis. Hence our Opposers must either say, that in their Houses there were not only no Infants, but none in their childhood, or else they must say, that when the Holy Ghost speaks of Houses, he intended only some particular persons in those Houses.

But for the first, It is altogether improbable, that there should be so many Families, and yet no young Children in them, there is a probability there might be Infants, but much more that there were Children, who though past their infancy in a strict sense, yet improbably baptized upon the account of their own personal profession : and as for the latter, that would be to recede from the letter of the Text, which ought not to be without evident necessity, whereas here is none at all. And for the further clearing up of this first Observation, let us take a more particular account of that one Instance of Lydia's house said to be baptized with her ; the story you have *Act 16. 14, 15.* And here let three things be attended to.

First, That it is evident her Household was with her at that Assembly of Women, to whom the Apostle preached ; for after her own and her Household's baptism, she beseecheth Paul to go home with her, verse 15.

Secondly, It is evident this was an Assembly of Women, verse 13.

Thirdly, Here is no mention made of the conversion of any but of Lydia her self. Now let things have their due consideration ; Ly-

*dia's Household* was baptized; that is, all her Household, or all that appertained to her, that might be properly said to be her Household: it seems she carried her whole Household to that Assembly; this Household probably numerous, or consisting of several persons, otherwise the particulars would in reason have been mentioned; here were no Males grown up, for it was an Assembly of Women: It is true, there might be Males in their infancy or childhood, it being no way unbecoming to carry such to such an Assembly; and notwithstanding them, the Assembly might be said to be an Assembly of Women. Now how improbable is it, that there should be a Family, a numerous Family, and not one Male among them; if there were any, they must rationally be supposed to be in their childhood; a great Family, and not one Infant or Child in it, but every one capable of a ready understanding what was taught, so as in a few hours to attain to a competent knowledge in the Mysteries of the Gospel, and these all wrought upon by one Sermon, when none else in the whole Assembly, for ought is recorded, were wrought upon; yet that the Holy Ghost should only take notice of the conversion of *Lydia* her self, and not in the least intimate the conversion of any in or of her Household, I will not say, but that it is simply possible, that there might be the concurrence of all these things, but it is to me altogether improbable, that it should be so, it is vastly more probable, that some, if not all, that were baptized of her

her Household , were indeed baptized upon the account of her Faith , and not upon the account of a personal profession of Faith and Repentance that themselves did m<sup>rke</sup>.

But here it is said, That this Household of *Lydia* had some Men in it, as appears from verse 40. and it is probable some Women also, who were converted with *Lydia* , and they are the Household said to be baptized.

But to that I answer , That it doth no way appear that these Brethren, whom the Apostle, verse 40. is said to have seen, were of *Lydia's* Household , they might be Neighbours converted after *Paul's* comming to her House, who now came in to see *Paul* , or whom *Paul* before his departure went to visit : 'Tis evident by what hath been already said they were none of her Household , said before to be baptized with her ; so that this one Instance , all things considered, makes it exceeding probable, if not evidently certain, that some in the Houses, whose baptism is recorded in Scripture, were baptized upon the meer account of the Parents Faith, without consideration had to their own personal Faith and repentance.

Secondly, Let it be observed, that it doth not appear , that any in or of these Households were converted antecedent to their baptism , as for *Lydia's* Household, there is not the least intimation of the conversion of any besides *Lydia* her self ; yea, there is, as we have already seen, *tantum non*, a certainty, that at least some of her Household were baptized upon the account of

her faith, and not their own personal profession; and as for the Gaolers Household, it doth not certainly appear, that any in or of his, said to be baptized, were converted antecedent to that their baptism: It is true, there are two passages urged to prove, that they were such of his as were wrought upon by the Word as spoken by Paul.

First, It is said verse 32. *That they, that is, Paul and Silas, spake to him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house:* Whence it is supposed, that all that were in his House, and consequently his, said to be baptized, ver 33, must needs be such as were capable of having the Word preached to them.

But to that four things may be replyed.

First, It is uncertain whether this speaking of the Word, of which Luke speaks, was antecedent to the baptism of the Gaoler and his House; things are not alwayes declared in that order in which they were done.

Secondly, Suppose that be granted, yet it cannot be concluded from thence, that there were none incapable of having the Word spoken to them in his House: See a like Instance Deut. 31. verse last, it is said, *Moses spake in the ears of all the Congregation of Israel the words of this Song, until they were ended:* Now shall we conclude, there were no Infants or little Children in that Congregation? The contrary is evident, verse 12.

Thirdly, It is no way evident, that the persons in his House, to whom the Word was spoken,

ken , were numerically the same persons said to be baptized , all of his said to be baptized , seems plainly to intend different persons from all those in his *House* ; to whom the Word was spoken .

But fourthly : Suppose the persons were numerically the same , yet the having the Word spoken to them , will not conclude their conversion by that Word , the Word may be spoken to those that are not converted by it ; so that this passage doth no way evince the conversion of any in his *House* , besides himself alone , antecedent to his and his *Housholds* baptism : I do not say absolutely there were none , but it cannot be certainly concluded that there were any .

Secondly , The other passage urged to prove the conversion of the Houshold antecedent to their baptism , is that verse 34 where it is said , according as we read , *He rejoiced , believing in God with all his Household* ; but the Greek runs exactly thus , *καὶ ἐματάσθη τοῦ οἴκου* , *πεινῶν πίνεσθε τῷ Θεῷ* , *He rejoiced with all his house , he believing in God* : Now his house might rejoice , though none were savingly wrought upon but the Gaoler himself ; and indeed the Apostles laying the ground of their joy in his personal believing , they rejoiced , he believing in God , doth plainly intimate , that as yet the Gaoler alone did believe , for why else should he not say , they believing in God , or at least that the benefit , which was the matter and occasion of their joy , did accrue unto them through his faith ? 'Tis not

for nothing that the Apostle makes his personal believing in God the ground of the joy of the whole House ; so that it doth not certainly appear, that any in the Gaolers house did believe antecedent to their baptism.

And for the Household of *Stephanus*, there is nothing evidencing their or any of their faith antecedent to their baptism : 'Tis true, we read that his Household did addict themselves to the Ministry of the Saints, *1 Cor. 16.15*. But whether these, said to addict themselves to this Ministry, were converted before or after his embracement of the Gospel, and his and his Household's baptism, is altogether uncertain.

Thirdly observe, That suppose some particular persons in or of these Houses, said to be baptized, might be converted antecedent to their baptism, yet from thence it cannot be concluded, that in other Houses it must needs be so also, nor yet that the Households, as generally considered, were not baptized upon the account of the Parents faith : as suppose there were any converted in the Gaolers House antecedent to their baptism, from thence it cannot be concluded, that any in *Lydia's House* were converted antecedent to their baptism ; so suppose there should be some of the Gaolers House converted before their baptism, yet to argue from thence, that Baptism was not administered to the Houses, as more generally taken, as the Houses of believing Parents, is a meer *non sequitur* : So that suppose it could be proved, which yet it cannot be, that some in or of some one or other

of the Houses, said to be baptized, were baptized upon the account of their own personal profession of Faith and Repentance, yet that would not overthrow the evidence that the Instances of any Housholds being baptized, as a Household of a Believer, gives in to the truth contended for; the probability of any one Household, yea, or any one in or of anyone Household, being baptized, as the Household, or as of the Household of such a Parent, carryes alike evidence to the truth pleaded for, as taken abstractly in it self, as it would do in case there were the same probability, that all these Housholds, and all in them, were baptized, as such Housholds.

From the whole of what hath been said touching these several Instances, and that as taken abstractly in themselves, I shall not doubt to conclude, that there is at least a very great probability, that in primitive times Houses were, together with their converted Parents, baptized, and that meerly as the Houses of such Parents.

And yet further, for the making it more probable, that these Housholds, said to be baptized, at least some in or of them, were indeed baptized, not upon the account of a personal profession of their own Faith and Repentance but upon the account of their Parents Faith, as received into the same Covenant-state with them, let these things be considered.

First, How exceeding improbable it is, that in case none could be admitted into communion with the Body of Christ by Baptism, but upon a personal profession of Faith and Répentance, the Sacred Historian, writing by divine inspiration, would mention, and leave upon record, the baptisme of any one Household, without giving the least intimation of the conversion of at least one or more in or of that Household, that so the ground of the baptism of the rest might have been clearly inferred: That the Covenant, together with the Sign and Token of it, should be of the same latitude and extent in the administration and application of it, that it was under the first Testament, might be rationally expected by all men: hence it may be well supposed, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is expressly said to be faithful in all his House, as Moses was in his, would if not have given some express and positive discovery of his will, as to the baptism of persons upon the personal profession of their faith and repentance, exclusive of all others, which our Opposers themselves will hardly affirm that he hath done, yet would have given in so full and clear an account of the Apostles practice in execution of their Commission, *To teach and baptize the Nations*, as should have evidently obviated all mistakes, in a case wherein mistakes so probably would be, when it is so evidently declared, that under the first Testament, upon persons taking hold of the Covenant, both themselves and *Housholds* were admitted and incorporated into the *Body of Christ*,

Christ, by the then Sign and Token of the Covenant ; and then declared in the New , that together with Parents, upon their embracement of the Gospel , their Housholds were admitted and implanted into the same Body ( as the Apostle is express in *Ephes.* 3. 6. that the Body is one and the same ) by Baptism , the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, and no account is given of the personal faith and repentance of any in or of those Houses, at least some of them, as the ground of their baptism , besides the Parents alone : Sure none can deny , but here is a rational ground to suppose, at least very probably, that the Covenant, and together therewith the Sign and Token of it, is of the same extent and latitude as it formerly was. Now I say, consider how extreamly improbable it is , that the Holy Ghost shoud record the Baptism of whole Housholds, taking notice only of the faith and repentance of the Parents , without giving the least intimation of the faith and repentance of any in or of such Housholds, thereby giving so clear a ground of mistake, in case none under the new Testament administration ought to be admitted and incorporated into the mystical Body of Christ , as visible , but upon a personal profession of their faith and repen-tance.

Secondly , Let it be considered , how the Holy Ghost doth vary his manner of expression in his narrative of those primitive transac-tions, when he speaks of the baptism of Housholds, he tells us, the Housholds were baptized, together with

with their Parents , not giving the least intimation of the faith of any in or of those Houses, as the ground of their baptism ; but when he speaks of more general Assemblies, or concourses of people, he speaks more distinguishingly, *As many as gladly received the Word were baptized,* *Act 2. 41.* And why the Holy Ghost should speak so distinguishingly in one place and not in the other; is hard to say, unless it should be, because in respect of such more general Assemblies and concourses of people, consisting of grown persons, the personal faith and conversion of each was necessary to their baptism , but not so in respect of the Houses of believing Parents, but that is for these Instances, as taken abstractly in themselves : But now compare one thing with another , and the evidence is vastly more clear ; for as considering what hath been said, to prove the interest of the Infant-seed of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and what hath been said, to evidence a right to Baptism to be of equal extent to interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, it is undeniably to me , and I can hardly think, but it will be so to others, who will freely entertain Light when held forth unto them , that these Housholds were baptized, as the Houses of such Parents , upon the account of their interest in the Covenant ; so on the other hand, when we see what hath been before said , concerning the interest of believing Parents in the Covenant, and concerning their right to Baptism upon that account , and then find whole Housholds baptized,

baptized, and that so very probably, to say no more, as the *Houses* of such Parents, it may much more strongly perswade us of that their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and of their right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant. But let that suffice for the proof of our third subordinate Proposition.

What Objections the Truth we have contended for will meet with from the contrary minded, shall now be considered.

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CHAP.

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## C H A P. XI.

*Objections against the last Proposition answered. The conclusion of the whole.*

*Object. I.*

**N**Otwithstanding all that hath been said for the confirmation of the three foregoing Propositions, yet some may say, That it is not the will of Christ, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents should ordinarily be baptized ( may be at least very probably concluded ) from those various passages that do occur in the new Testament, wherein such things are declared to have attended the administration of Baptism, and such things are affirmed of, and required from the baptized in the primitive times, which cannot attend Baptism, as administered unto Infants, nor can be truly affirmed of, or rationally required from them. See 1 Cor. 12. 13,21, 25. Ephes. 4. 16. Gal. 3. 26, 27.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* This Objection will soon vanish, and appear to have no strength at all in it, if we consider these three things, which because they are so obvious to every one of a competent understanding, and at all acquainted with the

Scriptures,

Scriptures, I shall need do little more than mention.

First, Consider that what in these or the like Scriptures is declared of, or required from the Body of Christ, or the several Members of that Body, as united and incorporated, by the means ( whether internal or external ) appointed for that end and purpose, agrees to, and equally concerns the whole Body of Christ, and the several Members thereof, simply and absolutely, in all times and ages; the Body of Christ is but one, successively continued throughout all ages; and hence it may as well be concluded from these Scriptures, that Infants never were, nor ever shall be admitted into this Body, ( the contrary whereunto is most evident ) as that in the primitive times they were not by Baptism admitted into it, as then existent in the world.

Secondly, Consider that it is a thing of frequent occurrence in Scripture, for things to be declared and spoken of, or to whole Bodies or Societies, and that in the most universal and indefinite terms, which yet are to be understood and applyed variously, with respect to the particulars, according to their respective capacities and concernments, in what is so declared or spoken: See this abundantly verified in that Speech of *Moses* to the whole Congregation of *Israel*, recorded in the twenty nine and thirty Chapters of *Deuteronomy*, there are some things spoken as universally true of them all: So their standing before the Lord, in order to their renewal

newal of their Covenant with him, thus, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, there are other things spoken, which were alone true of the grown persons among them, and that but in part true of some of them, in whole true of others: Thus their seeing what God had done for them in *Egypt*, and in the Wilderness, some had seen both the temptations they had been tried with, and the Signs wrought before them in the Wilderness, but had seen nothing, in respect of a personal sight, of what God had done for them in *Egypt*: Others had seen what God had done both in the Wilderness and in *Egypt*, and yet the same things are universally declared of them all, verse 2. So again, there are other things affirmed and declared of them all in one and the same expression, which yet were to be understood in a different manner, as applyed to particulars: Thus of their entring into Covenant, it is said of them universally, *They stood before the Lord to enter into Covenant*, and yet they could not enter into it after one and the same manner, the grown persons were to do it personally, the Infants and Children, incapable of a personal covenanting with God, were entered by their Parents. Yet take one more Instance, that Command, to keep the words of that Covenant they were now entring into, is imposed upon them all universally, verse 9. *Keep therefore the words of this Covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that you do:* Yet who will say, either that there were no Infants, or that Infants are capable to keep the words

words of that Covenant? So that we may see how variously, what is indefinitely, and in the most general and universal terms spoken to or of an Assembly, or united Body of people, as collectively or generally taken, is yet to be understood and applyed to the particulars of that Assembly, or Body of people. And several other Instances, of a like nature with this, might be given : See *1 Cor 10.* begin. but I am willing to contract as much as may be: Thus in respect of the passages the Objection is grounded upon, what is declared to have attended the administration of Baptism, or what is spoken of or to the persons baptized, is to be understood and applied to particulars, according to their respective capacities and concernments in what is so declared and spoken.

Thirdly, Let it be considered, to whom, or for whose use the Scriptures were written, as also what is the special design of the Holy Ghost in those passages the Objection is grounded upon: And thus let it be considered, that the Scriptures were written to and for the use not of Infants, while in their infant capacity, but grown persons; and the design of the Holy Ghost, in the places mentioned, is either to instruct and establish in some necessary truth, or press to some necessary duty; and hence what in the forementioned passages is spoken to or of the Body of Christ, and the several Members of that Body, only concerns such persons, and is of special use to the promotion of the design aimed at in them; but that is no Argument, that Infants,

Infants, to whom these things agree not, and who are not concerned as such in them, nor are capable of improving them to the end intended, were not of that Body, and consequently not admitted into it by Baptism, especially when the mind of Christ is fully revealed in other places as to that matter.

*Object. 2.* But the main and principal Objection, and indeed which hath any considerable appearance of weight in it, is that raised from *Mat. 28. 19.* compared with *Mark 16.15,* 16. where the institution of Baptism, as is supposed by many, a Commission authorizing and requiring the administration of it among the Gentiles, as is granted by all is recorded. Now say our Opposers, Infant baptism cannot be according to the will of Christ, in as much as it agrees not with the institution of Baptism: the institution warrants the teaching and baptizing the Nations, that is, say the Objectors, such of the Nations as are taught, and by teaching made Disciples, but here is not a word concerning the Baptism of Infants. Now say they, certainly had it been the will of Christ that Infants should have been baptized, he would have so expressed the institution, as that his mind should have been plainly and clearly held forth therein, touching this matter; but here not being the least intimation that it is his will that they should be baptized; therefore their Baptism cannot rationally be judged to be according to his will.

*Answe.*

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* I shall not debate the Question, whether this of *Matthew* be, or may be, fitly called the, or an institution of Baptism, either absolutely, or unto us Gentiles, though let me say, it seems something strange to me, how it comes to bear the denomination of the institution of Baptism, seeing Baptism was in use long before this Command was given out, and certainly the Administrators of it would not act without an institution, neither do I think it can properly be called the institution of Baptism to us Gentiles. I doubt not, but this was only a Commission given out by Christ to his Apostles, and in them to all the Ministers of the Gospel, authorizing and enjoining them to administer those two Ordinances, of preaching the Gospel and Baptism, afore instituted, in such an extensive way, as is here expressed in the administration of which Ordinances the Administrators were and are to be regulated, not only by the letter of this Commission, but by all other directions Christ himself had, or yet should give them, relating to that their administration: But let that pass, call it the institution of Baptism, absolutely or respectively to us Gentiles, or a Commission, it is much at one as to my present purpose: As for the Objection, as aforesaid down, a brief answer may suffice: Two things, I suppose, are and will be granted by the generallity of, if not universally by all our Opposers.

First, That this Institution or Commission, call it which you will; doth not of it self necessarily exclude Infants from partaking of the Ordinance of Baptism;

Secondly, That this institution or Commission doth warrant, yea, enjoyn the application of Baptisme to all those our Lord Jesus Christ hath in his Word declared, that it is his will they should be baptized.

Now let but these two things be granted, and I have what I desire, having, as I judge, sufficiently evidenced, that Baptism was practised in primitive times by the Apostles themselves, and by others, by their allowance, direction and approbation, which whether I have done or no, I shall leave to the judgment of all judicious and impartial Readers, so that I might dismiss this Objection, the framers of it granting what I contend for: but yet because I find this Objection so much insisted upon, and accounted, by those of the ablest parts among our Opposers, to be the main and principal Objection, to oppose that practice of Infant-baptism we have hitherto pleaded for, I shall take it a little further into consideration, and see what strength it hath in it: and I find three things in a special manner urged, as giving strength to it.

First, That that Relative ~~are~~, ~~them~~, in this Commission, must refer to Disciples, included in the Verb ~~μαθητεύοσθαι~~, translated by our Translators teach, by others, Disciple, or make Disciples, and not to ~~θην~~, Nations.

Secondly, That Infants being incapable of teaching, cannot be, nor in any propriety of speech said to be, Disciples.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That this institution or Commission is to be understood exclusively , as excluding all from a rightful participation in that Ordinance of Baptism , who are not comprehended in it ; and hence the sum of what is urged from this institution or Commission, against the practice of Infant-baptism , amounts to thus much . That the Subjects, appointed by Christ to be baptized, being Disciples , and Infants not being , nor rightly to be called Disciples , and all others besides Disciples being excluded from Baptism, by Christs appointing of them as the proper Subjects of that Ordinance ; therefore Infants neither may nor ought to be baptized : And thus, I conceive, we see the utmost strength of this Objection.

For answer, I shall a little distinctly consider these three things giving strength to it.

And for the first , That ~~are~~<sup>2072</sup>, them , must refer not to ~~the~~<sup>2073</sup> Nations, but to the Noun Disciples, included in the Verb ~~teach~~<sup>2074</sup>, to teach as its Antecedent or Substantive.

This I deny, and affirm on the contrary, that it ought to be referred to Nations, and not to Disciples, supposed to be included in that Verb, and that for two Reasons,

First, Because we ought to keep to the literal and plain Grammatical construction of a Text, where there is no necessary Reason to enforce a recession from it : Now according to the literal and plain Grammatical construction of these words, they must refer to Nations, whether

we translate that Verb , teach or make Disciples, saith Christ, teach all Nations, or make all Nations Disciples, baptizing them : Baptizing whom ? Why , the Nations , who according to this Commission of Christ are to be taught, or made Disciples : And here is no necessary reason why we should recede from the most literal and plain Grammatical construction of the words ; what reason is pretended shall be taken notice of by and by.

Secondly, Because it is doubtful, whether the Noun Disciples , supposed to be implied in the Verb μαθητεύετε , were eyed by our Saviour in this Commission ; what is affirmed in this matter, is affirmed mainly, if not only upon the conceit of a Criticism , concerning the signification of that word, viz. That it must needs signify, to teach *cum effectu*, or to teach till the persons taught become Disciples : But now whether this Criticism were attended to by Christ , or whether he useth the word in that sense or no, is altogether uncertain : We see evidently *Mark* useth another word in setting down this Commission , Go preach the Gospel to every Creature , which, say our Opposers , answers this, Go teach all Nations ; which if true, we may read the Commission thus , Go preach the Gospel to every Creature, or to all Nations, baptizing them ; and then there can be no other antecedent, but the Creatures or Nations to be taught ; and it is certain , the Gospel may be preached where no saving effect is produced by it, in those to whom it is preached ; so that to

leave the plain Grammatical and most literal construction of the words , and to ground a construction upon a supposed Criticism , whereas it is wholly uncertain , whether Christ eyed any such Criticism or no , as using that word in this Commission , is altogether unsafe , and therefore , I say , Nations , not Disciples , must be the antecedent to *αυτούς*, them , enjoyned by this Commission to be baptized : But some Reasons are urged to prove a necessity of taking Disciples , as included in that Verb , as the Antecedent to them :

The first is this , Because it is said that Christ (*viz.* by his Disciples ) made Disciple and baptized , *John 4.1.* therefore *μακρινωστε* must be in this place understood of making Disciples also .

But to that I answer , That though Christ and his Disciples did by preaching make Disciples , yet all that they preached to were not made Disciples ; they preached the Gospel to many who were not thereby made Disciples : hence it will not follow , that because Christ and his Disciples made some , yea many Disciples , by preaching , therefore the Apostles , and other Ministers of the Gospel , were enjoyned by this Commission to teach , *cum effectu* , in respect of all they were to teach : That they were and are to endeavour to teach so ; as that the Word may be effectual , and Hearers may be made Disciples , is unquestionable ; but that they should be enjoyned so to preach , as that the uneffectualness of their Doctrine should be their sin , as it seems to be , in case Christ eyed that Criticism , can be

no way inferred from this success vouchsafed to their Ministry, while exercised among the Jews.

But secondly, Though the Disciples did baptise the Disciples made by their preaching, yet it is not said, they baptised only Disciples; that Disciples are to be baptized, suppose their case be the same with those there mentioned, is unquestionable; but that they only are to be baptized, is not in the least intimated: So that from this expression in *John*, it cannot with any shew of reason be concluded, that Christ had an eye to that aforementioned Criticism, in that word used by him in this Commission; nor if he had, that yet Disciples must needs be the Antecedent to them; the words may be as well read, Disciple all Nations, or make all Nations Disciples, baptizing them, and yet Nations, not Disciples, be the Antecedent to them.

Secondly, Another Reason to enforce the sense pleaded for by our Opposers, is this, because that sense seems best to agree with the words of *Mark*, *Mark 16. 15, 16.* where this Commission is thus expressit, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature;* which, say our Opposers, answers this phrase, *Go teach all Nations;* *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved,* which answers, say they, *baptizing them:* hence they infer, that the Subjects of Baptism are Disciples, and these Disciples must be Believers.

But to that I answer, That there is no necessity of so interpreting the one Evangelist by the other; we may, conjoyning both together conceive

conceive the whole Commission , as thus given out by Christ ; *Go ye therefore, teach all Nations, baptizing them ; I say , Go preach the Gospel to every Creature ; He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned :* And then as in these words recorded by *Mark*, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, Christ explained himself, as to the extensiveness of his meaning , in that phrase , *All Nations*, used by *Matthew* : So in the latter clause , *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; he that believeth not, shall be damned :* Christ informs them what the issue of their discharge of their Commission should be , in regard of the Nations to be taught, or Creatures, to whom the Gospel should be preached by them, those that should believe, and be baptized, should be saved, but those that believed not , however they might be baptized, yet they should be damned ; which must needs , according to the unanimous consent of our Opposers, be understood of the adult ; whence it will follow, that *Mark* speaks not at all of the Subjects of Baptism, but of the issue of the Apostles discharging their whole Commission , both in respect of preaching and baptizing , in respect of those towards whom they should discharge it , in case they should receive the Gospel preached , or through the preaching of the Gospel should believe , and were baptized, then they should be saved ; but though they had the Gospel never so faithfully preached to them, yea, though they might so far imbrace it , as to submit to Baptism, yet unless

they believe, they should, notwithstanding that, be damned.

Thirdly, It is yet further urged, that in case ~~ever~~, them, did refer unto ~~them~~, Nations without any limitation, then this Commission would warrant the baptism of any Person or Nation in the world, whether taught or no, which it is rightly said, we our selves acknowledge ought not to be.

To this the answer is at hand, 'Tis true, it would do so in case there were no other directions in any other part of the Scriptures, for the Ministers of the Gospel to regulate themselves by in the discharge of this Commission; but this supposed evil consequence is sufficiently obviated in other places of Scripture, where the right Subjects of Baptism are sufficiently declared, *viz.* grown persons, in case they were not afore baptized upon their faith and repentance, and with them their Infant-Seed; and this, I conceive, is the very design of Christ in this Commission, to authorize, yea, enjoyn the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of Baptism to the whole world, by persons duly called to administer Gospel Ordinances unto men, yet so as to regulate themselves, in respect of both the one and the other, by such directions and limitations as himself had or should give, in relation to a due administration of both Ordinances; and that the Disciples and Ministers of the Gospel were and are to regulate themselves in the dispensing the Gospel unto men, as well in the administration of Baptism, by other Rules

afore or after given by Christ, is sufficiently evident throughout the new Testament ; so that notwithstanding what it urged to the contrary. I conceive, it is fully evident, that *them* in this Commission, specifying the Subjects of Baptism, refers to Nations, not to Disciples, as its Antecedent.

Now having discovered the uncertainty, yea, falsity of this first Principle asserted, and laid as a foundation to the Objection proposed, the Objection is so far enervated, as that little need be added to the other two things, from which, in conjunction with this, it receives the whole of what strength it hath.

And therefore secondly, as to what is asserted in the second place, viz. That Infants neither are, nor can in propriety of speech be called Disciples, it concerns not me ; it is enough, as to my present purpose, that they may be comprehended under that phrase, *All Nations* ; I shall therefore only say, that I cannot but conceive, that will men judge impartially, suppose we should grant, that *them* in this Commission of Christ doth refer to Disciples, and not to Nations, and consequently that Disciples are the proper Subjects of Baptism ; yet they must acknowledge, that what hath been said by others to prove, that Infants may and ought, according to Scripture account, be numbered among the Disciples of Christ, renders this Objection wholly insufficient to counterballance the evidence produced from other Scriptures, for the establishment of the practice now pleaded

pleaded for , which is all at present I contend for.

And therefore thirdly , As for that Assertion That this Institution or Commission is to be understood exclusively , and consequently , that none are to be baptized, but such whose baptism is in express terms warranted by it. I shall only say it is true, we ought so to understand it, in case we had no other Scriptures for our direction in the administration of Baptism , but take this Commission or Institution absolutely in itself, and the not including Infants in it, is not an excluding of them out of it. We see here Christ speaks immediately and directly to his Disciples, *Go ye therefore, &c.* none besides them are expressly included in it , and shall we say therefore that this Commission only concerned them ? Surely no, it is a Commission for all that at that time , or in after Ages, should be called forth by Christ to minister in the Gospel ; so it will not follow, suppose Disciples be the Antecedent to them, that therefore none else are to be baptized : As for what Instances are brought of Commands, express only positively, & yet interpreted by all Interpreters exclusively, as *1 Cor. ii. 28.* and the like, the Reason is, because no other Scriptures allow any others, but such there spoken of, to partake of that Ordinance there spoken of, otherwise the bare commanding persons to examine themselves, in order to their due receiving of that Ordinance , doth not of it self exclude all others from it, that do not, or cannot examine themselves ; so that I say, the Institution

ion or Commission, as abstractedly taken, doth not exclude all from the participation of this Ordinance of Baptism, who are not in express terms comprehended in it, which is all that I contend for, and as I have said, I suppose will be granted on all hands; so that should we grant, that *them* is to be referred to Disciples, included in that Verb, and that Infants are not Scripture Disciples, neither of which, notwithstanding all that is said by our Opposers, is granted, our Proposition may stand firm, for though Infants are not expressly included in the Commission, yet they are not excluded out of it, therefore their Baptism must stand or fall by the evidence of other Scriptures, and we having sufficient evidence from other Scriptures, that it is the will of Christ that they should be baptized, their not being expressly mentioned in the Commission, ought to be no Remora in the way of our thankful embracement of what light he hath elsewhere given of his mind and will in this matter.

*Object.* 3. There is an Objection or Argument, which some seem to conceive to have a very great strength in it, yea, to be unanswerable, which is carried on gradually to this issue, say the Framers of it, Seeing there is no express Command requiring the Baptism of Infants, the practice must needs be deduced only in a consequential way from the Scriptures: Now to prove that it cannot be rightly and duly deduced from any Scripture in a consequential way, so as that

the

the omission of it should be a sin in the Parents, (and their sin it must be if it be a sin at all) against any Law of Christ, it is thus argued;

If the omission or neglect of the Baptism of Infants were a sin chargeable upon their Parents, as being a transgression of some Divine Law, then some one or other, at one time or other, would in Scripture have been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: But no one, at any time whatsoever, is in Scripture either commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it; Therefore the omission of it cannot be a sin chargeable upon the Parents, as a breach of some divine Law.

Which Argument laid down catagorically must run thus.

Whatever practice is consequentially deduced from Scripture, in case it be from Heaven, some one or other, at one time or other, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: But no one was ever commended for the practice of Infant-baptism, nor blamed for the neglect of it; Therefore it cannot be from Heaven, but must needs be of men.

And for the proof of the Major Proposition, several Instances are produced of Duties consequentially drawn, in respect of which we find, that some one or other, at some time or other, hath been commended for the practice of them, or blamed for the neglect of them: thus, if I mistake not, that action of Phinehas, in slaying

Zimri

*Zimri and Cosbi*, recorded Numb. 25. 6, 7, 8. is produced as one Instance, and variety of other Instances are reckoned up.

*Answ.* In answer to this Objection, or Argument, I shall say in general, that were it not for the high conceit some have of it, and that the sudden proposal of it, especially in the heat of disputation, when the mind, variously distract-ed cannot alwayes suddenly recal it self to a due weighing of what is proposed, may for a little while seem to puzzle such, who yet upon a little serious review of it will soon discern the extream vanity of it, I should wholly pass it by, as not thinking it worthy an answer, the weakness of it so evidently appearing to all considerate persons; but seeing it is supposed to be of such strength, for the opposing the practice I have hitherto pleaded for, I have judged it meet, to take it into consideration, and as previous to a direct Answer to it, I shall premise these two Questions.

First, Whether it be necessary, for the determining whether any controverted practice be from Heaven or of Men, that this commendation or discommendation, of persons practising or neglecting of it, should be expressly, or in plain words, declared in Scripture? or whether it be not sufficient, that they themselves may be consequentially, and by way of Argument, drawn and deduced from Scripture.

Secondly, Whether it be necessary that this commendation or discommendation, pleaded to be

be so necessary for the end mentioned, must be contained in some Scripture distinct from those the practice controverted is deduced from, or whether it may not be sufficient that they are contained in some Scriptures, which yet may be urged to give countenance to the practice under debate? And let the Framers of this Argument answer to these Questions, as they conceive most conducing to the end designed in it.

These two Questions being premised, let us come more directly to the Answer; and it may be answered several wayes, according to the Answer our Opposers shall give to the foregoing Questions.

First, Suppose it shall be said, That it is sufficient to determine any controverted practise to be from Heaven, in case it can be consequentially, or rationally deduced from any Scripture whatsoever, whether urged to give countenance to the practice controverted or no, That some one or other, at one time or another, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: Then I shall answer these two things.

First, I deny the Minor Proposition, and say, that we have Instances of persons commended for the practice of Infant-baptism, take these Instances, of *Lydia*, the Gaoler, and others.

But it is replyed, It doth not appear that they had any Infants baptized, and therefore *Luke's* telling us, that they and their Households were baptized, cannot be interpreted as a commendation.

tion to them for practising of Infant-baptisme.

But to that I answer, *Lis sub judice est*, we judge they had, our Opposers judge they had not: And who shall be Judge in this case? Surely neither we nor our Opposers, being both parties in the case controverted. And therefore,

Secondly, I say, That this Argument leaves the Controversie as it found it, and is of no use at all for the end designed in it; Its design is to prove, that the practice of Infant-baptism is not from Heaven, but of men, and it leaves it as doubtful, whether it be from Heaven or of men, as it was before; for notwithstanding such commendations or discommendations may be produced the way allowed in this Answer, yet the practice will be doubtful, and the Reason is evident, because it may be doubted, whether these commendations or discommendations are rightly and duly deduced from Scripture or no. And therefore,

Secondly, I suppose the Objectors or Argumentators must needs say, That such a commendation or discommendation, as is required, must be declared and expressed in some plain and express Scripture, or the consequence be drawn so evidently, as amounts to a plain and express Scripture; but then how extreamly ridiculous the Argument is, will soon appear to every ordinary capacity; and the Major may be justly denied, and that for a fourfold Reason.

First, It is evidently false , there are some practises consequentially drawn , owned , and practised by our Opposers , as well as by our selves , respective unto which no one Instance can be produced of any , either commended for the practice of them , or discommended for the neglect of them : That Instance of Womens receiving the Lords Supper is obvious , that practice is only warranted in a consequential way ; for where is any express Command to warrant it ? And let any such Instance , as agrees with the sence of the Oponent in the Major Proposition be produced of any Woman , that is in Scripture commended for the practice of it , or discommended for the neglect of it .

Secondly , This Argument involves the Authors of it in an absolute contradiction , considering what is and must rationally be granted by them , for the practice the Argument makes head against , must rationally be granted to be controvertible , or a practice that rational men may differ in their judgments about , some conceiving it is from Heaven , others conceiving it is from Men . Now let it be carefully observed , that supposing there were any plain Scripture expressly declaring , that some one or other had been commended for the practice of it , or blamed for the neglect of it , how could it be controvertible among wise and rational men ? Sure the producing of such a Scripture would put it out of all question , among those that will be guided by Scripture light ; so that this Argument doth imply , either that a controvertible

ble practice may be so evidently declared in Scripture , as to admit of no controversie about it , or else that there is no such thing as a controvertible practice in *rerum natura* , which is an easie way of deciding all Controversies ; for as for duties plainly exprest and declared in Scripture , no wise man will move a controversie about them ; and as for practises consequentially drawn , the way is most obvious , to determine whether they are from Heaven or of men ; if from Heaven , some one at one time or other would have been in Scripture either commended for the practice of them , or blamed for the neglect of them ; if no such commendation or discommendation be extant in Scripture , than they are infallibly of men : Now surely it may easily be found out , whether there be extant any such commendation or discommendation , respective to any Religious practises whatsoever , so that were this Objection or Argument worthy of any notice to be taken of it , we should soon have an end of all our Controversies among all sober Christians . But

Thirdly , Suppose no practice could be instanced in besides that in controversie that is from Heaven , but hath received its attestation from God , one of the wayes mentioned in this Argument ; and suppose the Framers of it were not involved by it , in such a contradiction as afore declared , yet , I say , the proof is wholly insufficient . For

First , The Instances produced for the proof of it are wholly impertinent , as to the thing to

be proved ; for observe it , what is that which ought to be proved, in case the Argument make any opposition against the practice pleaded for ? It is this , that all those practices that are deduced from Scripture only in a consequential way, and on that account are controverted among rational men, ought to have a Testimonial from God, of their being from him, in case they are so, by his either somewhere in Scripture commanding some one or other for the practice of them, or blaming some one or other for the neglect of them ; if this be not proved , the practice of Infant-baptism , though deduced only in a consequential way, may be from Heaven, notwithstanding none have ever either been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it.

Now mark, what do these Instances produced prove only this , that some practices may be lawful , which yet are deduced only consequentially from Scripture , in as much as some have been commended for practising upon that ground, others have been blamed for the neglect of practising Duties so deduceable, *Et quid hoc ad rhombum* , what is that to the purpose ? the Instances, if pertinent to the purpose for which they are brought, should be of practices produced, as afore exprest, which Antecedent to a lawful practise of them, have received some such testimonial from God, of his approbation of them by the wayes mentioned.

Secondly, Suppose we should grant ( which yet we by no means can do ) that these Instances were

were pertinent, yet who can say the enumeration is full and compleat, yea, it is evident it is vastly deficient, for notwithstanding we find such and such practises owned to be from God, by the commendation he hath given to some one or other for the practising of them, or by the blame he hath laid upon others for the neglect of them: Yet who can say, but that some duties and practices might have been duly deduced in a consequential way, from some discovery that God had afore made of his will, in respect of which there is no one Instance throughout the whole Scripture, of any one practising of them, nor mention made of any ones neglect of them? Shall we think, that no more duties were deducable from the several Laws, whether Moral or Ceremonial, or Judicial, than some have been commended for the practice of, or others have been blamed for the neglect of? It would be most irrational to suppose it. For any to infer, that because such and such have been commended for the practice of such duties, which they have consequentially drawn from some antecedent discoveries of the will of God, or others have been blamed for the neglect of others that might have been consequentially drawn, therefore whatever practice is duly inferred, by consequence would have its attestation from God one of those wayes, in case it were indeed from him, is as unreasonable an Inference, as well can be drawn by any man that hath the use of his own Reason,

Fourthly, I answer, That the Instances mentioned for the proof of the Major Proposition, are so far from proving that, the confirmation of which is designed by them, that they do indeed prove the quite contrary : The thing to be proved is this, That all such practises as are deduced consequentially from Scripture, in case they be from Heaven , as the pleaders for them pretend them to be, would be declared so to be by some commendation recorded in Scripture, that God at one time or other had given to some one or other for practising of them , or by some reproof, that he at one time or other had given for the neglect of them.

Now for the proof of this, several Instances are brought of practises deduceable only in a consequential way , in regard of which , we read how God hath commended some for the practice of them, and blamed others for the neglect of them.

Now let these Instances be well weighed, and we shall see they prove the quite contrary to that, the confirmation whereof they are designed unto , namely, That a practice that is only consequentially drawn from Scripture, may be lawful, yea, a duty, though none have antecedently been ever commended by God for the practice of it , or blamed for the neglect of it. Take that action of *Phinehas* in slaying *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, and suppose *Phinehas* to have deduced his duty in that particular only by way of consequence, from some antecedent discovery of the will of God : Now it is evident, that *Phinehas* doth

doth perform that duty , and was accepted of God in it , as only so consequentially deduced, without any approbation of it from God, either of the wayes before mentioned , was there any one at any time , either commended for killing *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, or for killing any others upon the like occasion , and yet we see *Phinehas* only deducing his duty in a consequential way , is faithful in it , and is accepted and rewarded of God ; and the like will be found true of all other Instances of the like nature , produced for the same end and purpose : And thus suppose the practice of Infant-baptism were only deduced in a consequential way , and no one were ever commended for the practise of it, nor any ever blamed for the neglect of it , yet it may be safely practised, and none need, upon the account of the want of such Instances as is required , question their acceptation with God ; we have the Instance of *Phinehas* , and other of a like nature, for our warrant and encouragement, because Saints have formerly been accepted, and highly rewarded for the doing of that their duty, which they could only infer in a consequential way, and if we, following of them , do indeed rightly infer our duty , and faithfully practise it , we shall be alike accepted of God, and not miss of our reward. From all that hath been said , we may see the unreasonableness of this Argument, and were it not for the Reasons aforementioned , I should have judged it rather worthy of contempt than a serious answer.

These Objections being answered, I conceive, I may with safety and security to the Truth pleaded for, come to a close, only whereas it is by *An-pædobaptists* usually queried, What can we rationally suppose can be the end of our Lord Jesus Christ, in appointing the application of Baptism to Infants while in their infancy? Or what good can accrue unto them by it, seeing it is certain they understand not what is done unto them, neither are they capable of making any present improvement of it?

I judge it necessary to offer something for their satisfaction, wherein yet I shall, on the account elsewhere mentioned, be very brief, and all that I shall say at present is this, That take Baptism, as the Sign, Token, or Seal of the Covenant, as it ought to be taken, and answerably applied upon that ground, viz. their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and as serving to, and performing those various uses and ends, with reference to which a Sign or Token in the general is annexed to the Covenant: And so I say, that as there were mighty ends of our Lord Jesus, his appointing the application of it to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, so exceeding much good doth and, were it rightly and duly improved by them, as they grew up to a capacity enabling them thereto, vastly more would accrue unto them thereby.

I shall give this one Instance, and that is Its useful subservency to their preservation in that Covenant-state, into which they, as the Seeds

Seed of such Parents, were afore admitted, and consequently to the injoyment of all the good benefits and blessings of the Covenant, and the useful subservency Baptism hath to this great end lyes in this, that thereby the Seed of Believers are anticipated, in their choice of what God they will serve, and what way they will walk in.

For the clearing up of this let it be observed, that youth is ordinarily mans chusing time, hence whereas we read in Eccles. 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.* Arius Montanus in his *Interlineal* reads, *In diebus electionum tuarum*, in the dayes of thy chusing; the word comes from a Root, which properly signifies, *elegit, selegit*, hence the Substantive, by a Metaphor, is used to signifie a Youth or a young Man, either because of the fitness of youth for service, upon which account such are usually chosen out for special service, whence is that frequent phrase in Scripture, of *chosen men*, speaking of Souldiers, or men appointed for war, or else because youth is the special time of mans choice; Man so soon as capable of reflecting upon himself, and perceiving his own indigency, as to that happiness his natural make and constitution yenders him capable of, is forc'd to look out and cast about him, for the gaining from without such a supply as may compensate that indigency he finds himself to lye under, and no sooner doth man begin to look abroad into the world, but as variety of objects, so variety of wayes and courses of life occur to his mind and thoughts,

from whence he may conceive a hope of furnishing himself with those supplies ; and as in the general, a Deity, with the wayes and means of his worship and service, and the world, with the various wayes and means of gaining and injoying that, become Competitors in his choice : So seeing to all Nations, nor to all people in each Nation, there is not one and the same God, nor one and the same way of worshipping & serving him, & seeing there are variety of particular Objects in the world, & various ways and means of gaining and injoying this or that particular Object, hence he hath variety of choice, when in the general he is come to a resolution with himself, whether it shall be by the worship and service of a Deity , or by the gaining and injoying the world , he will attempt his own happiness, and according as the mind is swayed towards , at least so as to fix upon this or that object, or this or that way or course, such usually at least frequently , is the man throughout his whole life and conversation , take it of the things of the world in general, as coming in competition with a Deity , with the way and means of his worship and service , if the mind be swayed towards the world, so as to fix upon that, the man usually lives an irreligious life, and prosecutes the world and the things of that throughout his whole life ; but now if it please the Lord to open the eyes , and shew the Soul himself , and effectually draw and incline the mind to himself and his wayes, with the benefit and advantages of chusing , serving and wor-

shipping.

shipping him , it is unto God and his wayes of worship and service that the man applyes himself, as the only way to attain unto happines. So take it of any particular object in the world, or any particular way or course of life, according as the mind fixes at the first, so is the man throughout his whole life and conversation. Now, I say, 'tis in youth at least usually, that the mind of man pitches upon this or that object, this or that way or course, afterwards prosecuted, or after taken and walked in throughout the following part of his life ; hence it is found, at least very frequently, as for those who enjoy the means of Grace in their youth , if they are not then wrought upon to close in with God in Christ his wayes and worship , as the only way to attain unto happiness , they are seldom ever wrought upon.

Now here is an eminent expression of the goodness of God to his people , that as he hath extended his Covenant to their Seed, so he hath ordained the application of the Sign and Token of the Covenant unto their Seed as well as to themselves , that he might thereby anticipate their choice , that when they come to look abroad into the world, they may find themselves afore well provided for in their interest in God, and find themselves preobliged to take God in Christ as their God and portion, and to walk in his wayes, they find themselves not left at liberty to chuse what God they please , or walk how or in what way themselves please, but they find themselves afore dedicated and given up to God

God in Christ, as his people, and obliged and engaged by Baptism to cleave unto him, and to walk in his wayes, and supposing them by those upon whom that concern is incumbent, instructed in this Obligation they are prevented by, and what is the danger of breaking of it, their baptism hath a most useful subservency to the preservation of their Covenant-state, and consequently their injoyment of all the good, blessings and benefits of the Covenant. And let me add thus much more, That Baptism having a blessing annexed to the administration of it, is one of those means, supposing the party baptized come to make a due improvement of it, that God doth make use of effectually to incline the heart of the Seed of Believers, to a right and willing complyahce with that Obligation put upon them by it; and by this little hint we may easily perceive, that God had weighty ends in injoyning the application of Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant, as well as Circumcision of old, the then Token of the Covenant to the Infant seed of his People; and that the application of it is of admirable use and benefit unto them, when duly improved by them; and certainly then it must needs be not only highly injurious to the Seed of believing Parents, to withhold the Token of the Covenant from them, they being thereby deprived of a special means, subservient to their preservation, in their Covenant-state and injoyment of all the good of the Covenant, but exceeding prejudicial to the interest of Christ in the world, the Tabernacle

of *David* as we have before proved, is raised up, and upheld among the Gentiles, by Gods taking Families into Covenant with himself: Now to neglect a special means that God hath appointed, subservient to the preservation of these Families in their Covenant state, must needs directly tend to the ruine and overthrow of the interest and Kingdom of Christ in the world : But not to inlarge upon this at present.

From this little that hath been said we may easily perceive , that the application of Baptism to the Infant seed of Believers , is no such vain or useless thing, as it is by two many supposed.

I have only a few more words to add , as a *Coronis* to the whole foregoing Discourse , and I have done.

That it is the will of our Lord Christ , that the Infant seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized, is to me, upon the grounds afore laid down, unquestionable ; how far it will be so to others I cannot say ; only this I know, that whatever light is held forth by man , for the discovery of the mind and will of Christ, relating to any practice, yet unless he, who is the great Prophet of his Church, shall vouchsafe to open the eyes of the mind, and prevail upon the heart to imbrace and submit unto that light held forth, the holding of it forth will be wholly insignificant , as to any benefit accruing therefrom unto men. Man may, according to what assistance is vouchsafed from Christ , hold forth light discovering the way he would have his People walk in, but 'tis wholly in his own power,

power', whose Prerogative it is to lead into all Truth, to enlighten the mind, and cause the Soul to walk in that way : Leaving therefore the whole of what hath been said in his hand , and to his blessing , I shall wind up all with a three-fold advice, according to the various, sentiments of men about , and their various concerments in the practice I have contended for.

First, As for such who have been , and notwithstanding what is here offered, or hath been by others, shall still remain to be so far dissatisfied about the practice we plead for, as wholly to omit it. and walk in that way that lyes in a direct opposition thereunto, let me advise, and in the Spirit of meekness earnestly beseech them to carry it, under their present persuasions, and practise with a holy fear and trembling. The grounds held forth in the foregoing Treatise, and by several others , pleading for the same Truth, seem so full and clear, yea, to me so convincing,, that I can hardly fear being accounted over confident ; though I take it for granted, that the most confident and resolved of our Opposers must needs acknowledge , that our doctrine and practice of Infant baptism stands upon the same level of probability, if the advantage be not on our side , that the opposite Doctrine and practise doth , and that upon supposition of our Doctrine and practice being found agreeable to the mind and will of Christ, the opposite Doctrine and practice must needs be highly prejudicial to the comfort of believing Parents , the good of their Seed , and which is most

most of all, eo the supportation and propagation  
of the interest and Kingdom of Christ in the  
world. And let me add, that when the conse-  
quences of refusing or claiming a priviledge are  
of an even size, the refusing such a priviledge,  
suppose it be indeed granted, and ought to be  
accepted of, is a greater sin, and more displeas-  
unto God, than the claiming and appropriating  
of it, supposing it be not granted, nor that claim  
really warranted by Scripture is, as is evident to  
every considerate person: we see how much  
God was offended at *Abaz* his refusing a Sign  
when offered to him; how much God was dis-  
pleased with *Moses* for neglecting to circumcise  
his Child: therefore, I say, walk with a holy  
fear and trembling, lest as some will meet with  
a *Who required this at your hand?* so you shall  
meet with a *How durst thou refuse this priviledge  
at my hand?*

Secondly, As for such whose judgment and  
practice agree with, and answerably are con-  
firmed by the foregoing Discourse, especially  
such to whom God hath vouchsafed that bles-  
sing of Children, let me advise, and importu-  
nately intreat them, yea, in the Name of our  
Lord Christ command them, that they satisfie  
not themselves in the bare discharge of their  
duty, in regard of the application of Baptism  
to their Seed in their infancy; know that your  
work is not done when you have brought yours  
within the verge or under the bond of the Co-  
venant; you will find in the foregoing Papers,  
that your Seeds inheriting the good which, in  
common

common with you, they are Heirs unto, depends much upon your faithful and wise discharge of your duty towards them, as growing up to years of maturity: *Abraham* must command his Household that they keep the way of the Lord, and that to this end, that God might bring upon him the good promised, with reference to his, There is hardly any thing a greater discouragement to Ministers, in pleading for and administering Infant-baptism, than the great neglect of Parents towards their Children, when baptized and grown up to a capacity of understanding and improving their Baptism, afore administered to them; therefore seeing you lay claim to *Abraham's* Blessing, as his Children, walk in *Abraham's* steps, both in respect of your own personal faith and holiness, and also in instructing and commanding your Children, that they may keep the way of the Lord: In particular, let them know their privilege, and the danger of forfeiting of it, by breaking that Obligation put upon them by Baptism.

Thirdly and lastly, As for such who are the Seed of believing Parents, and who by Baptism have been dedicated and given up unto God in Christ, and incorporated into his mystical Body, as visible: Let me advise, perswade and charge them, that they lay no more weight upon their Baptism, in relation to their eternal happiness, than the nature of the Ordinance, and the end of Christ in appointing the application of it, will warrant. Baptism, abstractly taken, infallibly secures Salvation to none; neither can

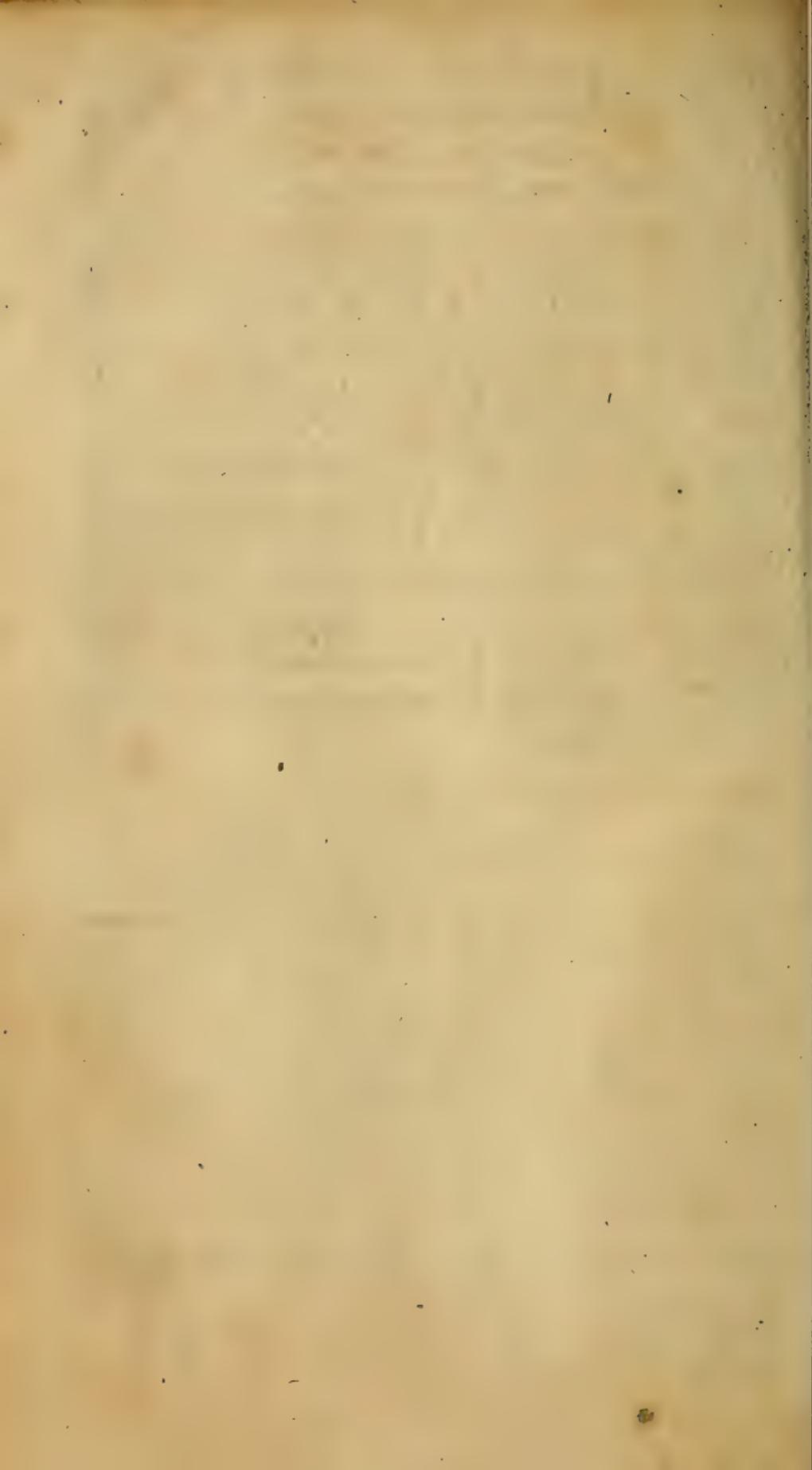
Baptism

Baptism of it self be laid as a sure ground to bottom a plea for Salvation upon ; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, however baptized, shall be damned,* is one of those unalterable Decrees laid up in the Records of Heaven : In respect of which we may say , as *Job* in another case of God, *He is of one mind, and who shall,* that is, none shall, *turn him,* Job 23. 13. Your abiding in and injoying the benefits of the Covenant, into which , as the Seed of such Parents , you were admitted in your infancy , indispensably requires your personal faith and obedience ; therefore be faithful in the discharge of your duty , and in so doing you may , upon sure grounds , apply and improve your Baptism , as Gods Seal, infallibly securing your injoyment of the good promised.

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*F I N I S.*

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Infant-Baptism  
FROM  
HEAVEN and not of MEN,  
THE  
SECOND PART:  
OR AN  
ANSWER  
TO  
MR DANVERS his TREATISE  
of BAPTISM.

Wherein, as the Vanity of his Authorities  
are, though briefly, yet sufficiently detected;  
so his Doctrinal Part is especially examined  
and confuted, and Infants Right to Baptism  
further confirmed.

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By J. Whiston, Minister of the Gospel.

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*The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but the lying tongue is but for a moment, Prov. 12. 19.*  
*In fædere divino cum Abrahamo inito substantia & ve-  
ritas constans est & immutabilis, Junius.*

---

L O N D O N,  
Printed for, and sold by Jonathan Robinson, at the  
Golden Lion in S. Paul's Church-Yard, 1676.

Second Part  
of Mardonius

SECOND PART

HISTORIA

OF

The First and Second

Books of the

Antiquities of the Persian Empire,

and the History of the Kings of Persia,

and the Kings of Media, Lydia, and

Babylonia, and the Kings of Egypt,

and the Kings of Phoenicia, and the

Kings of Syria, and the Kings of

Armenia, and the Kings of Cappadocia,

and the Kings of Lydia, and the

Kings of Cilicia, and the Kings of

Phrygia, and the Kings of Lydia,

and the Kings of Cappadocia, and the

# CHRISTIAN READER.

**N**either the writing nor reading of Controversies (supposing the subject weighty and important) would be without their pleasure or profit, were they managed as they ought to be. The understanding of man finds somewhat of pleasure even in searching after, much more in discovering truth, of what kind soever it be. And that which adds not a little to the pleasure and delight of a sincere Christian in searching after and finding out divine truth, is, as a consciousness to himself of discharging his duty in the search he makes after it, so the great love he bears to it, and consequently the acceptableness of it to him when found out. And for disputable doctrines or practices to be thoroughly ventilated and sifted, that the utmost of what may be said either for or against them may be brought to light, is not a little profitable; it highly conducing to the conscientious embracement or rejection of them, as also the peace and satisfaction of the mind, as having embraced or rejected according to the evidence appearing on the one or the other hand. But when men shall rise up either in defence of, or opposition to any controverted doctrine or practice, and manage their undertaking only with naked repetitions of Scriptures, reasons, or objections that have been already sifted to the bran, and answered again and again, with the alone addition of some ungrounded dictates, illogical deductions, forgeries, or the like of their own, as it is matter of wonder, what content such men can take in writing, so no pleasure or emolument can arise unto Readers: But on the other hand as such men must needs expose themselves to contempt and scorn, so the issue of their writings will be the further exasperations of mens spirits, and the disquietment of their consciences, who having been unwarily proselyted, do at last come to discover the cheat that hath been put upon them. As for Infant-baptism, though to me it is

## The Epistle

εραποίδης, yet it must be reckoned among τὰ αποίδης Theologiae. Neither shall I be so uncharitable as to impute all the scruples that may arise in the minds of men about it, to ignorance or perverseness, nor will I brand all enquirers about it as κυνθόμενοι τὰς εἰδούς as the Apostle speaks of some, 2 Tim. 4. 3. Nor yet should a rational logical discourse, (such as I deny not some of Mr. Tombes his former writings have been) in the examination of the chief grounds laid for it (provided the scripture be allowed the place *supremi judicis*) be at all offensive, but greatly welcome unto me. But as for that tract of Mr. Danvers here examined, and some dictates of Mr. Tombes of later date, they are in the highest degree nauseous, and can return to no good account either to Writers or Readers. As for this Tract of Mr. Danvers, I can say no less of it, than that it is a meer cheat, neither can I well think himself can in his most serious thoughts pass any other censure upon it. I have often thought (supposing him a man under any fence of a future account) he must needs have that of the Apostle in his mind during the whole composure of it, *I have caught you with guile*: The utmost that he could rationally promise to himself, was, that he possibly might beguil some unwary Readers into a complyance with what himself had imbibed, under the notion of an important truth. How he could imagine that his attempts should prove successful with any men of a competent understanding I cannot see? Seeing his book carryes along with it a sufficient antidote against its own embracement by such Readers. Could he think that his Authority should be regarded by any man that attends to what he reads, or hath so much use of his own reason, as to compare what he finds in one page, with what he finds in another, when some of his own Authors so evidently contradict what others of them, and those *multis nominibus* less regardable do affirm; will any man of an ordinary understanding, who lies not under the force of his own prejudices and præengagements believe that Boemius, Willifrid Strabu, or any other contemporary with, or consequent unto them, could better know what the primitive practice was, than

Austin

## To the Reader.

*Austin* or *Chrysostom*, who lived so many hundred years nearer those times than they did? Will any man entertain the least supposition that Pope *Innocent* was the inventor or the institutor of Infant baptism, when such credible and unquestionable Authors as these shall in express terms affirm it was in his days the universal practice of the whole Church, yea had been so time out of mind? As for the argumentative part of his book, alas! how little more, yea how much less hath he said, than what others have said before him? Who may not say, who knows not such things as these? As for what he hath added of his own, it cannot well but be interpreted no less than an impeachment of the understandings of all men, so much as to offer any assistance to discover the weakness and fallaciousness of it: And his book carrying such apparent preservatives against its own reception, no wonder though it meet with no sooner a reply. Alas! who could imagine that it needed any? For my own part, it cost me not a few thoughts to determine with my self what should be the Authors design in it. Sometimes I was ready to think he was no friend to the Anabaptists, but designed only to cast a slur upon their cause: Sometimes I was ready to think he only designed to gain to himself the repute of a man of great reading; and that the argumentative part was only to make way to the publication of those variety of collections he had heaped up. And other thoughts I had, but at last hearing more of him; (for he is wholly unknown to me by face) charity obligeth me to hope he is one of those the Apostle speaks of, who building upon that good foundation the Lord Jesus Christ, though it be wood, hay, and stubble, yet themselves shall be saved. yet so as by fire with the loss of their works. I hope he hath at least an habitual love for our Lord Christ, and verily judgeth the promotion of the cause he is engaged in would be acceptable service to him, since he hath managed his whole undertaking so, as he conceiv'd it might prove successful among at least persons of weaker judgments.

I remember not long since one of the same persuasion with our Author having put forth a small tract in pursu-

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ance of the same design, I hapned to meet him at a friend-house in *Wapping*, whither he had brought some of his books to be dispersed among the men of his own perswasion. I cast my eye upon one of them, and presently discerning the fallacy. I askt him whether he knew of no weightier objections that might be raised against his assertions than what he had there taken notice of? His reply was, he hoped that what he had done might do some good. So I suppose Mr. *Danvers*, though he could not hope that any persons of learning or judgement would be moved by what he had written, yet he hoped that his pains might do some good according to his account of good. But alas! such petty designs will in the close only prove destructive to the cause, the supportation of which is attempted by them; when any opinions or practices appear evidently to be only supported by fraud and guile, or that which is worse, however those that are præingaged may be backward to relinquish them, yet all that are disengaged must needs be greatly prejudiced, as against the opinions and practices themselves, so against the promoters of them. It hath been (as I have elsewhere intimated) no little wonder to me, whence it should come to pass that Christians, and those too, at least some of them men of learning and judgment, should so tenaciously maintain an opinion lying in such a direct opposition to their chil-drens good as well as their own comfort, and can satisfie themselves with such pityful nonsensical evasions and petty reasonings, yea will rather run themselves upon the greatest absurdities, than submit to the plainest demonstrations. And after much revolving the matter in my mind, I cannot but assign the cause hereof, as to the things there mentioned, so to their præingagements, and in special to the want of a clear understanding in the Covenant of Grace, both in respect of the good granted, and conveyed thereby to the Infant-seed of believers, and the true tenour there-of, as extended to and made with them: And pardon me though I say I cannot but think not only Antipædobaptists, but even Pædobaptists themselves, yea and that some of the most learned among them, have been greatly wanting here.

in :

## To the Reader.

in : Hence are those expressions; in the writings of Pædo-baptists, of an outward Covenant, a Covenant of priviledges and the like, phrases greatly obstructing the reception of the truth they have done worthily in the defence of. From the same cause in the general, it is that our opposers talk of a Covenant with the elect, and of that grand promise of Gods being a God to people, implying and necessarily including all that good whether relative or positive contained in all the promises of the Covenant. Were the primitive doctrine of the Covenant revived, I should not much question but all men of judgment and conscience would soon center in the primitive practice of Infant-baptism, some essays of that nature shall ~~own~~ shortly be made publick. This I would only say at present, that the Covenant taking it in a proper sense, as (implying a stipulation on Gods part, and a restipulation on mans) is so far from being restrained to the elect, that it is not made with any one of the Elect, *quā* Elect. Election is unto eternal life, to the attaining of which they are predestinated to a Covenant-state, neither are any *Abrahams* seed meerly as elected. Hence were it evident that this or that particular person, whether Infant or Adult were elect, yet could he not be duly baptized on that account. It is Covenant-interest not Election that gave a right of Circumcision of old, and gives a right to Baptism still: Were but the Covenant rightly understood, this controversie about Infant-baptism would have vastly less difficulty in it. Its true tis a controversie of long agitation, which renders the gaining satisfaction about it more difficult, and cannot ordinarily be attained to without some considerable pains and diligence, as well as a freedom from all prepossessions and preengagements. But will any serious enquirers willing to take what pains and use what diligence is necessary in such a case (suspending for the present their judgment about the good and benefit that the seed of believers have by vertue of their Covenant-interest , and membership in the Church, and answerably waving the interpretations put upon the propria-  
ses appertaining unto them, with the deductions drawn

## The Epistle

therefrom) thoroughly weigh, and faithfully compare what is written on both sides, in special by Mr. *Danvers* and Mr. *Tombes*, including his late letter to Mr. *Danvers*, on the one side, and by Mr. *Baxter* taking in the ensuing papers, and that small treatise often referred to in them, on the other, as I doubt not but they will be sufficiently furnished with light to proceed by; so I shall freely leave the controversie to their determination and doubt not but that though they may not at present see what is the proper benefit Infants have by their Covenant-interest, Church-membership and Baptism, nor apprehend how the one or the other can be granted to them without some inconveniences ensuing, yet will be clearly convinced that both the one and the other must be granted to them; and answerably when they come to see the true tenour of the Covenant stated, and those inconveniences feared, obviated, they will be abundantly satisfied in the determination they have made. And therefore though I had sometimes thought to have made some animadversions upon that late letter of Mr. *Tombes* to Mr. *Danvers*; yet I shall wave it, not doubting but the Reader will find what is material in it sufficiently obviated in the ensuing papers, taken in conjunction with the treatise referred to. It is true Mr. *Danvers* hath found out a new or rather reviv'd an old device, and that is, that however consequences may be drawn, and inferences made in other cases, yet in the worship of God nothing as worship is to be admitted without some plain and express word, either by precept or example, to warrant the same: And this he saith (though according to his intentment most falsely and disingeniously) is a known agreed rule among Protestants, and cites according to his usual manner several Authors for it. To which I would say in the words of a late worthy Author, that it must be a desperate cause that cannot otherwise be maintained, *viz.* than by denying scripture-consequences. And let me only ask Mr. *Danvers* whether the observation of the Lords day be a part of divine worship, at least be not acknowledged so to be by the generality of Protestants, and in special by those Authors he cites, and whether there be

any

## To the Reader.

any such express precept or example as he requires to warrant the same, though there is enough in scripture to prove that it ought to be observed which sufficiently shews his mistake of these Authors. They undoubtedly take consequences rightly and duly drawn equivalent to express precept and example. And let me say, will he not allow sound consequences in matters of worship, he will leave but little worship to be performed by the Church, and himself must reject some parts of worship, which yet I hope he owns and walks in the practice of. But men that are resolved to maintain their opinions, must say somewhat that may look like reason in the eyes of byassed or weak men, how unreasonable and absurd soever it be in the judgment of others. And yet further, let it be observed that whereas our opposers take it for granted and persuade people that we have only consequences to ground our judgment and practice upon, the truth is, we have especially for what we mainly contend for, *viz.* the Covenant-interest, and Church-membership of the seed of believers, the plain and express letter of the Scriptures, and they have only consequences to oppose us withal. The words are as express as words can be. *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed in their generations.* Now take this promise as firstly made to *Abraham* himself, and according to the letter of it, it must needs intend his natural seed immediately proceeding from his own loins. And the Apostle in express words tells us that the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon believing Gentiles. Or take the promise according to the full latitude of it as including his spiritual seed, yet to exclude his natural is contrary to the very letter of the promise, &c. take it as made to his seed, so it is to them in their Generations, which according to the letter must include their seed with them. So the Apostle tells those awakened Jews, the promise was to them and their Children. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians* in express words their Children were holy, yet once again, the Apostle assures the Taylor, that he believing, not only himself but his house should be saved. Which promise I suppose our opposers themselves will grant is applicable to all in his

## The Epistle

his case, and answerably according to the very letter takes in their Infant-seed supposing them to have any such. Here are no consequences but the plain and express words of Scripture, and our opposers have only consequences by which they endeavour to prove that these scriptures are not to be understood according to the letter, but must have another sence and meaning put upon them: Hence would our opposers yield to the very letter of the scriptures, and grant the promises of the Covenant do appertain to the seed of believers, and only suspend their Baptism, our differences would be very much healed. And yet further, let me say we want very little of the express letter of the scripture for their Baptism. It is according to the express letter of the scripture, that *Abrahams* seed in their Generations (which I have said must according to the letter include Parents and Children) should keep the Covenant, that is the token of the Covenant, and what other token there now is that can possibly be understood in this command to be kept by *Abrahams* seed, that is by believers in their generations, excepting Baptism, cannot be shewed. So according to the letter of the Scripture, interest in the promise is a sufficient ground for Baptism. *Repent and be baptized, for the promise is to you.* So that would but our opposers lay aside consequences and yield to the letter of the Scripture, our contentions would be, if not wholly at an end, yet greatly abated, we shall infallibly have what we mainly contend for, and a fair ground will be layd for our practice. And from what hath been said, it evidently appears our opposers are equally concerned in consequences with our selves, and answerably such pleas must be look'd upon but as mere pretences to screen off that light they are unwilling to submit unto. And indeed as the whole design of our Author, so many passages in Mr. *Tombes* his latter writings sufficiently evidence they are now reduced to meer artifices and shifts for the supportation of the cause they have unadvisedly engaged in. As an evidence hereof take an instance or two. Whereas our Author had said, the *Magdeburgenses* tell us, that in the first Century, they find they [only] baptized the Adult,

and

## To the Reader.

and being charged by Mr. *Wills* with the falsification of those Authors, and accused by some ministers of immorality, as well he might, let us see how in his reply to Mr. *Wills* he comes off. And to let pass his first answer, which only concerns Mr. *Wills*, his second is this, *viz.* that these words in his book are not his translation of their words, but his own fence upon them. But

First, I would appeal to Mr. *Danvers* his own conscience, whether he would not have had his Reader, and to all Readers, whether they did not understand them as their very words? His words are express, they tell us. Now who could imagine that Mr *Danvers* his meaning was only this, that so much might be inferred from their words. But granting him this, I would then appeal to him whether he did not design to put a cheat upon his Readers? For I would ask him as he will answer it at the bar of Jesus Christ, whether he was not willing that his Reader should, and did expect that he would believe that these *Magdeburgenses* had affirmed, at least granted somewhat more in favour of his cause, than what is the universal grant of all Pedobaptists? otherwise what a frivolous thing was it for him to bring them in as witnesses for him, But

Secondly, No such fence or interpretation can with any shew of Reason be put upon them, for they are very confident none more, that not only the Adult, but also Infants were baptized in that age, grounding that their confidence partly upon the Scriptures themselves, and partly upon the testimonies of those Fathers that lived near those times, . Now when they make only such a grant as is made by all Pedobaptists, *viz.* that no express Example is left upon record of any Infants being baptized, yet expressing the highest confidence that they were baptized, withal declaring the ground they had both from scripture and humane Authority for that their confidence, can any rational man interpret them as saying they find they baptized only the Adult, when they assure us they find the quite contrary, that they baptized Infants as well as the Adult.

Again, Whereas he had so disingeniously said that Tradition

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Tradition was the principal ground laid for Infant baptism, and Mr. Wills had charged him with immodesty, see how he comes off in his reply? Why it is by proceeding from immodesty to impudence. For

First, He would persuade his Reader, that there is little or no difference between the fence in which Protestants and Papists use the term Tradition, which is notoriously false. taking it of Tradition in the general; though it is true, the Papists speaking of Infant-baptism sometimes contradict themselves, affirming that it may be plainly enough gathered out of the Scriptures, which is inconsistent with their notion of Tradition.

Secondly, He would persuade his Reader, that take away Tradition, the doctrine and practice of Infant-baptism (according to our own concessions) would fall to the ground, when he cannot but know that most, if not universally all the chief assertors of Infant-baptism affirm, it may be proved alone from the Scriptures, though the doctrine and practice of the Church were utterly unknown. And if such men are not put to their shifts, I know not who are. The like may be seen in Mr. Tombes. Hence is that absurd notion invented of the seed of the Jews being Church-members meerly by a fact of divine providence. Hence he seems to design the scaring his Reader into a compliance with his notions: Hence are those big words speaking of Mr. Baxters book of Baptism, faith he, that accursed book, and why is it accursed? but because Mr. Tombes nor any others of his party can answer it. So speaking of the epistle of Cyprian to Fidus, tis faith he an absurd Epistle, wheu he knows, be it as absurd as it will (though so absurd as he pretends it is not) so long as it is genuine, and not forged (which he cannot say it is) it sufficiently serves our purpose, fully declaring that the primitive practice was for Infant-baptism.

Yet once again, with him to affirm that Ishmael was in Covenant, is in express words to gainsay the Apostle. And why so? Because the Apostle tells us he was cast out (*Gal. 4.*) that is out of the Covenant as hath been proved. Now to say he was ever in Covenant, because the Apostle faith

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faith he was after cast out of it, is with Mr. *Tombe* to gainsay the Apostle; and variety of like instances might be given. Now surely such things shew, men are reduced to their shifts, they see their cause would utterly fall, should it not be supported by such artifices and shifts. But I must hasten.

*Reader.* Thou mayst easily perceive, I have not been very forward to engage in this controversie. Thou wilt still find me in the rear: I am aware what discouragements attend such undertakings, saith *Austin*, *Bella quantumvis justa attamen hominibus molesta et tristia videntur, nam inter alia quæ refugit hūmanum ingenium, videbunt adversariæ partis iniquitatem propter quam coguntur pugnare, nec de ea non poterunt non dolere*, which is too evidently verified in our present contests. Hence a man can hardly appear against any error, but he will seem to be an enemy as well to the persons holding, as to the errors held by them. It must be said, so ill hath our present Author managed his undertaking- that it is hard, if possible, to detect his mistakes. but his miscarriages will be also detected. And how his Antagonist shall be treated by him may be too plainly guessed at, by the ill manner of his managing his cause. *Solomon* indeed tells us, *that he that passeth by, and medleth with strife, that belongeth not to him, taketh a dog by the ears.* But be the Issue what it will, this will be my comfort, I have not meddled with a strife, that belongs not to me. I am set for the defence of the Gospel, I had more than a single call to this work. I see not how I could have held my peace, without making a breach upon my peace. And if any shall say I need not have interposed, others have said enough, I answer, we account not the bringing water to quench fire got into the thatch superfluous, so long as there is water enough to be brought and the fire is not thoroughly quenched.

Others have done well, yet something more may be added. I must profess, I am so far from judging that all is said, that can be said for the clearing up and establishing the practice contended for, that though I will not say little is said in comparison of what may be; yet I am very confident,

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confident, much may be said beyond what is. As for the ensuing papers, they principally concern the doctrinal part of Mr. *Danvers* his book, and hence I have kept to his first edition, understanding that no material alteration is made in his second. What I have done is submitted to the judgment of all unbiassed and intelligent Readers. Others have said enough to discover the forgery and vanity of his Authorities, yet they are not wholly passed by. I know all could not buy all books that are written, and this may fall into the hands of some, into whose hands those others may not come. And besides, possibly some will be at a loss not knowing whom to credit being themselves unable to search Authors, here they may see Mr. *Danvers* his witnesses contradicting and confuting one another, and will but men seriously weigh his book, and compare his Authorities one with another, I doubt not they will find themselves sufficiently armed against all pretences, that either himself or any others may make of having humane authority on their side. For

First, They will evidently see his forgeries, and that designedly to deceive his unwary Reader, hence as they are sufficiently warned to take heed how to credit any thing himself hath said or may say, so they have ground to be wary how they credit any of his persuasion in what ever pretences they may make of this nature.

Secondly, They will see that upon the utmost enquiry that can be made into antiquity (for such an enquiry it may be supposed Mr. *Danvers* hath made) but only one, viz. poor *Tertullian* and he greatly abused too, can be pretended to have been against Infant-baptism for three hundred years after Christ. Mr. *Danvers* pretends to no more.

Thirdly, They will have the testimony of two of the most credible Authors that ever wrote, viz. *Chrysostom* and *Austin*, that before the year four hundred (for *Chrysostom* died in the year four hundred and five, and *Austin* in the year Four Hundred and Thirty) Infant baptism was the universal practice of the Church, yea had been so for ought what then appeared in any record from the Apostles

*To the Reader.*

postles days. And they that will after this be deceived by any pretence of humane Authority they must thank themselves, they have Mr. Danvers his book to rise up in judgment against them.

*Thine in the service of the Gospel.*

J. W.

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## ERRATA.

**R**EADER, by reason of the Authors absence from the pres<sup>s</sup>, many Erratas are escaped, the most material (some of which pervert the sence) are here noted, the lesser are left to thy ingenuity to correct or pardon.

Page 2. line 5: read bence. p. 7.l. 29.r. cite. p. 12.l. 3.r. thirdly. p. 32.l. 32.r. during. p. 48.l. 10.r. less heed. p. 49.l. 13.r. raze. p. 50.l. 29.r. opposed. p. 51.l. 2. after that they are add not. p. 64.l. 18. r. 66. p. 65. in the marg. r. scripture. p. 68.l. 9.r. by. p. 71. in the contents r. particulars. p. 77.l. 15. r. extend. p. 94.l. 6. after so add that. p. 97.l. 17.r. were. p. 111.l. 13.r. had. p. 119.l. 13.r. lower. l. 21.r. under.

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## CHAP. I.

Wherein some general Considerations, relating to the authorities produced by Mr. Danvers, in favour of Antipedobaptism, are laid down; shewing the vanity and insignificancy of them, as to his purpose.



T is the Apostle *Jude's* exhortation, that we should earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered to the *Saints*; and there are two things in special, that all *Saints*, yet more especially those, upon whom this duty is peculiarly incumbent, ought to contend for, with reference to the Faith. First, its purity; Secondly, its integrity; that nothing be added thereto, nothing detracted therefrom. And the Integrity of the Faith is of equal importance, and ought to be alike contended for, with the Purity thereof: Neither is the conditions or qualifications of any that attempt, either to corrupt it, by immixing their own Notions or Inventions,

## Infant Baptism from Heaven,

ons therewith, or to make any breach therein ; a sufficient discharge from this duty : In the discharge whereof, yet regard is to be had, both to the persons with whom, and matters about which we do contend. Here sometimes we must contend earnestly with those that profess themselves to be, and it may be hoped, intentionally are, Contenders for the Faith ; yea, and sharply to rebuke them for, not only the opposition they make, but their unchristian managing that opposition against , while they pretend, and possibly really intend to contend for, the Faith.

As for the Doctrine of Infant Baptism ; the further vindication and establishment of which, is at present designed : That it is, as I have formerly said, and so am more and more confirmed, a part of that Faith once delivered to the Saints, and consequently the contending for it, comes within the Compass of that Exhortation.

It is true, a late Author, for whom I have so much charity, as to hope he has (though greatly failing in a due use and exercise of his Grace, yet) an habitual good will for Christ, and the Faith delivered by him ; has appeared not a little confident of the contrary ; and answerably, has conceived himself obliged to make the utmost opposition he could, against that Doctrine and Practice, and industriously to endeavour the establishment of Believers Baptism, in opposition thereunto. Which of our Confidences hath the surer ground, shall be left to the Judgment of all unprejudic'd persons: But to lay what he hath said in the Ballance. Two things he attempts to prove,

and

and seems to conceive that he has done both so effectually, as that he seems to stand amazed, that all men do not immediately fall down before the Evidence produced by him.

First, he attempts to prove, That the Baptism of Believers is only Christ's Ordinance of Baptism.

Secondly, That the Baptism of Infants is no Ordinance of Jesus Christ.

Both these he attempts to prove by Scripture, by Reason, and Humane Authority: and though he would seem to make no great account of humane Authority, yet it seems impossible to me, that any man of a competent understanding should arise to such a height of confidence, as to the truth of his Assertions, as he is arrived to, had he not other grounds for it, than what he hath produced, either from Scripture or Reason. Alas! what a poor Pamphlet would his Treatise be, were all his humane Authorities pared off, and it left to defend its Cause, meerly by that evidence of Scripture and Reason it is furnished with; how evidently would the Scriptures, at least the most of them appear to be but meer repetitions of such Scriptures as have been answered again and again; without any shew of satisfaction given to those answers, or the least additional enforcement received from his application or improvement of them to his purpose.

What Reason does he offer, unless he will call his own ungrounded Dictates, or some frivolous deductions of supposed ill Consequences of the Practice he opposes by that name. I

cannot therefore but think that however he puts it off in words, yet indeed the principal ground, he lays to his great confidence, of having so effectually performed his undertaking, is the humane Authorities he has produced in favour of his Cause; they must not therefore be wholly passed by: Yet seeing himself seems to make no more account of them, they being as he expresses it, but *Argumentum ad hominem*; (the reason of his so expressing himself cannot but be guessed at, I suppose he designed them *ad facendum populum.*) I shall only here offer some few Considerations with reference to them in general, and leave them, to every one to make what use and improvement of them they see meet, and take the less notice of them in particular, as they occur in the process of his Discourse.

First, that which offers it self to Consideration is our Authors great Unfaithfulness in his Quotations, and gross abuse of the Authors cited by him in favour of his Cause: Sometimes he seems to have merely forged Testimonies, and to pretend Authors to have said, what he could wish they had; but what indeed never came into their minds, much less dropped from their pens: Sometimes he grossly perverts their words, wresting them to such a sense as apparently was never intended by them: Sometimes he mistakes, and fathers that upon one, which was spoken by another; *Testibus non testimonii credendum est*, &c. but here no man can credit this Witness. And though variety of other instances

stances might be, and are by another hand given, of the like nature and import, yet I shall only instance in those Testimonies he cites out of the *Magdeburgensian History* (of which he gives, and that not undeservedly, a great *Encomium*) in the 1. 2. and 3. Centuries: They tell us, says he, in his 56. page, *that as to the business of Baptism in the 1. Century, they find to have been after this manner*; and he instances in six things, that they, as he saith, relate with reference to Baptism; four of which, if not five, concern his purpose no otherwise, than the furtherance of his Cause depends upon the bulk of his Book: that which only properly concerns his purpose is the first, which he sets down thus.

*As to the Subjects of Baptism they tell us that in this Age* (meaning the first Century, the Age wherein Christ and his Apostles lived) *they find that they baptized only the adult or aged, whether Jews or Gentiles, whereof they say we have instances in the 2. 8. 10. 16. 19. Chapters of the Acts: But as to the baptizing of Infants they confess they read of no Example;* And he has the confidence to direct his Reader to the Century, Book and Page, where he saith they tell us all this: Whereas they are so far from telling us all this, that they say the direct contrary. Their words are express, *Baptizatos esse adultos tam Judeos quam Gentes exempla probant*, Act. 2. 8. 10. 16. 19. *De infantibus baptizatis exempla quidem annotata non leguntur; sed Origenes, & Cyprianus, & alii Patres authores sunt Apostolorum etiam tempore baptizatos esse; constat etiam*

hoc ex Apostolorum scriptis, &c. i.e. That the Aged whether Jews or Gentiles were baptized, those examples, Act. 2.8.10.16.19. prove. It is true indeed we read not of any express examples of Infants being baptized: But that they were baptized even in the Apostles times, both Origen, Cyprian, and others of the Fathers do testify; and this is also evident from the writings of the Apostles themselves: and then they shew us what evidence they conceived they had from the Writings of the Apostles that Infants were baptized. Now is this to tell us, that they find they baptiz'd only the Adult? Nay, do they not tell us expressly, that they find from the Writings of the Apostles, and the Testimonies of the Fathers that lived near those times, that they baptized Infants, as well as grown persons. As for what our Author further saith they tell us, concerning the Ceremonies attending the Administration of Baptism, as that the parties baptized did freely come, and offer themselves, professing their Faith; what ever they tell us of that nature, they evidently mean it of the Adult, for so, lest they should be mistaken and misrepresented, they do in plain words express themselves. *Ante Baptismatis impertitionem quoad adultos attinet de Doctrina Evangelii, &c. adultos edocuerunt;* they repeat that term *adult* twice, seeming to fear that their words might be wrested in favour of Antipedobaptism. Now then how far are these worthy Historians from saying they find they baptized only the adult; they tell us, that it is evident from the Apostles Writings, and also produce the Fathers living near those times, assuring us that Infants were then

then baptized, though no express Example of their Baptizing is left upon Record. And having thus grossly abused these worthy Centuriators in this first Century, he proceeds both to abuse them, and impose upon his incautelous Reader in what he cites out of them in the 2. 3. and 4. Centuries; for thus he adds page 59. As to Baptism in the 2. Century, *They say* (meaning these Magdeburgenses) Century 2. Chap. 6. pag. 109. *that it doth not appear by any approved Authors that there was any mutation or variation from the former*, and in confirmation hereof quotes what *Justin Martyr* saith in his second Apology to *Anton. Pius* the Emperour. Now he would have the Reader believe they say this with reference to the Subjects of Baptism, and consequently that they hereby deny Infant baptism to be as yet brought into the Church; whereas they speak not at all in that place cited by him of the Subjects of Baptism, but only of the Rites and Ceremonies attending its Administration; for so they intitle their Discourse, *De Ritibus circa Baptismum*: And the instance they give of the Jew baptized in the wilderness by his fellow-travellers (a Story I suppose our Author was willing to overlook) plainly shews it. But when they speak of the Subjects of Baptism, *Chap. 4.p.48.* they say expressly, *Nec usquam legitur Infantes hoc saeculo à Baptismo remotos esse*, and cites *Origen*, as affirming that the Baptism of Infants had been received by the Church as a Tradition from the Apostles. And after the same manner does he most grossly abuse them, and impose upon his Reader in what he cites out of them in the

3. and 4. Century. But it is needless to trace him any farther ; by what hath been said we may see the great unfaithfulness of our Author : So that look what Censure *Erasmus* put upon *Origen's* Works, translated by *Ruffinus*, the same must be past upon his Treatise ; no man knows when he reads Mr. *Danvers*, and when he reads the Authors cited by him. And this consideration alone renders all his Quotations useless ; in as much as no man can trust him any farther than themselves examine the Authors produced by him ; and suppose they may find him faithful in any one, yet that is no assurance that he is so in any other. He that knowingly falsifies one Author, deserves no credit in what he cites from any other. But to proceed.

Secondly, That which lies obvious to our observation is the utter Uselessness, Insignificancy, and Impertinency of very many, if not the major part of the Testimonies produced by him as to his purpose, suppose he hath been faithful in them: This will abundantly appear in a four-fold Instance.

First, not a few speak nothing at all to his purpose ; it can hardly be imagined what came into his head to swell up his Book with them : Thus to give the Reader a few Instances, that he may make more thorough observation himself, and he will be sooner furnished with plenty of Instances of the same nature. Thus in the 282. Page, where he attempts to prove the *Waldenses* were against Infants Baptism, he cites two of their ancient Confessions, wherein they profess themselves to own only Two Sacraments, viz.

Baptism,

Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; and what can our Author infer from hence in favour of his Assertion ? Did ever any make Infants Baptism a third Sacrament ? So for what he cites out of *Vignier* his Ecclesiastical History, Page 283. makes as little for his purpose , he tells us they expressly declare to receive the Canon of the Old and New Testament , and to reject all Doctrines that have not their foundation in, or are in any thing contrary to it ; therefore condemn all the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church of *Rome*. And who among Protestants may not be proved to reject Infants Baptism, if such Professions may go for proof ? For our Author himself to fancy that Infant-baptism is a humane Tradition or Ceremony, and conceit, without any rational ground, that others have done so too ; and hereupon to apply all that they have said or written, either for the perfection or sufficiency of the Scriptures, or a gainst humane Traditions or Ceremonies, as an evidence of their being against Infant-baptism, superlatively absurd and ridiculous. Of the same nature is that he tells us out of *Socrates* and *Crispin's Histories*, Page 272. concerning Pope *Innocent*, banishing the Donatists out of *Rome*, and the agreement between them and the Novatians, in the things there mentioned : what does all that make to prove that they were against the baptizing of Infants ? Must every one that any Pope hath banished out of *Rome* be presently an Anabaptist ; or must all those that agree in the things there expressed be against baptizing of Infants ? By such kind of proofs

proofs who may not be made Anabaptists ? But to leave the Reader to make his own observation and to proceed.

Secondly, nothing can be rationally concluded from others of his Authorities in favour of what he designs the proof of by them : Thus in his 282. 283. 284. Pages he cites two more ancient Waldensian Confessions of Faith, with their Treatise of Antichrist ; wherein they profess their belief : That in the Sacrament of Baptism , Water is the visible and external Sign which represents unto Believers , that, which by the invisible virtue of God's operating is within them : as also they profess that by Baptism they are received into the holy Congregation of the people of God, there openly protesting and declaring their Faith and amendment of Life : So that God is worshipped in vain, when persons are enjoyned to partake of Sacra- ments without Faith and Truth. So they con- demned Antichrist for attributing Regeneration to the outward work of baptizing Children (for that is all they condemn him for ; ) though our Author misrepresents their words, and makes them little less than nonsense, that they may seem more fully to favour his Cause. But now who can rationally conclude from all this, that they were against Infant-baptism ; seing the ver- y same, or like Professions have been made, and the like Expressions used by the generality of the Protestants in their Confessions and other Writings, who yet have zealously asserted Infant-baptism. To instance only in the *Helvetian Confession*, whose words are these, *We by being bap- tized*

tized do confess our Faith ; and yet in the very next page say, *We condemn the Anabaptists, who deny, that any Infants born of faithful Parents are to be baptized.* How far such Expressions are consistent with the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-baptism may be considered by and by : But to interpret such Expressions, or Professions, as an Evidence of the Authors denial of Infant-baprism is irrational ; seing they are the Expressions and Professions, commonly made by those who professedly own the Doctrine, and live in the Practice of Infant-baptism. Again , for what our Author tells us, that Doctor Usher cites out of *Thuanus*, *That several of the Berengarians, did upon examination say, That Baptism did not profit Children to salvation*, page 288. who can rationally infer from thence, that they denied Infant-baptism ? They might deny that Baptism profited Children to Salvation, especially that it did profit them meerly *opere operato*, which was the thing they denied, and yet not deny their Baptism : But to hasten. By what hath been said, it evidently appears that our Author cannot produce any one Article in all their Confessions, nor one Passage out of any of their own Writings, that make it so much as probable, that the *Waldenses* were against Infant-baptism. He hath only groundless Suppositions, false Reports, malicious Accusations of their Enemies, to ground his perswasions of their rejecting Infant-baptism upon ; when it is evident on the other hand from their own Confessions, and other Writings, that they did, at least as to the Generality of them, own and live in that Practice.

ctice. Variety of other instances might be given, but let these suffice. Therefore

Secondly, other of his Authorities, though they seem, according to the Letter of the words cited by him, somewhat to countenance his Assertions, yet nothing less was intended by the Authors themselves; neither can their words, all things considered, be rationally interpreted at all in favour of them: Of this kind are, if not universally all, yet the most of those Testimonies he cites out of the Writings of Pedobaptists. What they speak of, or with reference to the Adult, he will needs press into the service of his Cause, and apply them for the exclusion of Infants from Baptism, and establishment of Believers Baptism in opposition thereto.

Thus all those Quotations out of *Calvin*, *Piscator*, *Perkins* and *Paræus*, to prove, that the Commission given by Christ to his Disciples must be understood, as restraining Baptism only to Believers; so almost throughout his whole Book. It is in vain to enumerate Instances.

It's true, he grants their Judgment and Practice was for Infant-baptism; but says he in his Preface, to take his own words, *By how much they were against the Truth (so he calls his Opinion) in their Practice, by so much the Power and Providence of God may appear, so to make their Tongues and Pens to fall upon themselves.*

And he takes Mr. *Baxter* as a special Instance of the Power and Providence of God in this matter, To which let me say, Before he had interested the Power and Providence of God in matters

matters of this nature, he should have offered something at least to prove the inconsistency of what they have written, with the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-baptism; lest he be found to take the Name of God in vain, as well as abuse his Authors and Readers, which he hath not at all attempted to do: Wherein is the Contradiction between what they say of, or with respect to the Adult, and what they say and practise with reference to Infants? Sure unto Contradictions so much is at least absolutely necessary, That *affirmatio & negatio sit de eodem aut respectu ejusdem.* Our Lord Christ says to the Jews, *Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;* yet speaking of Infants, saith, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven:* Now who ever had so little understanding as to argue against Christ's intending Infants from a supposition, that then he must needs contradict himself in what he says to the Jews.

Again, says Paul, *He that will not work let him not eat,* yet exhorts aged women to teach young women, as other duties, so this *to love their Children,* which surely includes the giving them necessary food: Now will any be so prophanes and irrational as to say, here appears the Power and Providence of God in making Paul's Tongue and Pen to fall upon himself.

Thus Calvin and other Pedobaptists say, that men may rightly offer themselves to Baptism; Confession of sins is required, otherwise the whole action would be nothing else but sport, yet adding an express, *Notandum est de adultis hic verba fieri:* and then elsewhere says,  
That

That the Covenant, and Promises are extended to the Infants of Believers, and on that ground they are to be baptized.

And now Mr. *Danvers* presently conceits here's a wonderful Power and Providence of God in so making their Tongues and Pens to fall upon themselves ; yet attempts not to shew wherein the inconsistency between what they say with reference to the Adult, and what they say with reference to Infants does appear.

But it may be it will be said, however others may be reconciled to themselves, yet Mr. *Baxter* cannot ; for he speaks more significantly, he says of the Commission : It purposely expresseth the Disciples several works, in their several Places and Orders. Their first task is to make Disciples, which are by *Mark* called Believers ; their second work is to baptize them, whereunto is annexed the Promise of Salvation ; the third work is to teach them all other things. So again he argues most significantly : If there can be no Example given in Scripture, of any one that was baptized without profession of a saving Faith, nor any Precept for so doing, then we must not baptize any without it : But the Antecedent is true, therefore the Consequent : And he often useth exclusive terms ; saith that Jesus Christ hath by Scripture-precept and Example, directed us to baptize those that profess true Repentance, and no other, and therefore we must baptize them and no other.

Now says Mr. *Danvers* in his Preface, These Assertions, in the apprehension of such ignorant Creatures as we are, seem to be as contrary to his

his former Writings (he means those wherein he pleads for Infant-baptism) as light is to darkness. But let me only say, that though it is possible, there are such ignorant Creatures in the world as he talks of, yet I much suspect he himself is not so ignorant as he pretends; for I doubt not but he knows full well, that Mr. Baxter plainly enough declares, that they are only the Adult he speaks with reference to, in all that he saith of this nature: and wherein any difficulty should ly in reconciling all that he saith with reference to them, with what he says, with reference to Infants, our Author shews us not, neither can he: for who can imagine that a man should contradict himself, when he expressly declares he speaks of, or with reference to different Subjects. Where is the Contradiction between saying, that the Commission of Christ for preaching and baptizing, as it respects, and is to be executed with reference to the Adult, it must be executed in this order.

First, persons must be taught or made Disciples, and then baptized: But as for Infants, the case is different, they have a right to the Covenant and Promises, as descending from believing Parents, and onthat account are to be baptized. Now I say who can rationally suppose this man, as thus expressing himself; should contradict himself; men must be very ignorant indeed, that need help to reconcile such things as these, and from hence we may see, how utterly useless and insignificant all that our Author hath cited out of the writings of the Pedobaptist is, as to his cause.

Fourthly, Not a few of his Authorities, either speak expressly against him. or if they may seem to speak any thing for, yet as much or more against him, whence his Cause stands condemned out of the mouth of his own Witnesses : Thus attempting to prove that in the third Century, believers baptism was only practised. Having greatly abused ( though as the Reader may easily see, little to his own advantage ) the worthy Magdeburgenses, who expressly say in the very page cited by himself, and consequently (unless he received his Collections from another hand ) could not but know it, *Baptizabantur autem in utroque sexu adulti simul, & infantes* (Cent. 3. Chap. 6. pag. 124.) he brings in Mr. Baxter as saying in his Principles of Love, pag. 7. that he knew in the days of Tertullian, Nazianzen, and Austin, men had liberty to be baptized, or to bring their Children when, and at what age they pleased.

Now take his words as cited by our Author, yet they make more against him than for him; for if men might bring their Children, to Baptism when, and at what age they pleased, then they might bring them in their infancy, yea, *Mox postquam editi* as Cyprian's phrase is, though there was no humane Law to inforce them so to do. So again, whereas he had brought in several counsels, and particular Authors to bear witness as he speaks to believers baptism, in opposition to that of Infants in the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Century, page 76, 78. yet after (viz.) in the 2. Chapter of his Second Part, he brings in some of these very Councils, and Authors, as ordaining and bearing witness to Infant baptism,

yea

yea, and affirming that it was in those very ages the practice of the Universal Church, and had been so time out of mind.

For brevity sake, let us only take a more exact account of those two renowned Authors, *viz.*, *Chrysostom*, and *Austin*, both these he cites as witnesses for believers Baptism, Pag. 76. yet see what he cites out of both these for Infant-Baptism, *Chrysostom's* words as cited by himself, Pag. 121. are these, *Infants ought to be Baptized as universally received by the Catholick Church, to take away Original Sin*, so that Infant-Baptism was in *Chrysostom's* days, *the universal practice of the Church*. *Austin's* words as cited by himself Pag. 152. are these, *if there be any that do enquire for a Divine Authority for the Baptizing of Children, let them know, that what the universal Church holds, nor was instituted by Councils, but always retained, is most rightfully believed to have been delivered by no other than an Apostolical Authority* so that here is a Witness of our Authors own bringing forth, who affirms *verbis rotundis*.

First, that the universal Church did then hold Infant-Baptism.

Secondly, That it was not instituted by any Council, I may add, much less then by any particular man.

Thirdly, That it had been always retained, that is, ever since the days of the Apostles.

Fourthly, That hereupon it is most rightfully believed to have been delivered by no other than Apostolical Authority.

And what other Testimonies to the universal practice of Infant-Baptism in those Ages, do we

need, or can we desire, than what our Authors own witnesses give.

And here let it be observed, that these two Authors lived in that very Age, when he saith Infant Baptism, was instituted, and imposed by Pope *Innocent*; but whether it be in the least degree probable that it was indeed so, let all men Judge: but of that more hereafter.

If any shall say, if these Councils, and Fathers were for Believers Baptism, and yet practised Infant Baptism, how shall they be reconciled, how shall we reconcile their Doctrine to their Practice? Now for that our Author himself hath brought forth two Decrees, the former of *Justinian*, the other of *Justinus* the Emperours, that will fully reconcile this seeming Contradiction: *Justinian's* Decree was this, as recited by our Author Pag. 127. *that Children should be admitted to Baptism, but that those that were come to their full growth, shall be taught before they be Baptized.* See again the decree of *Justinus* to the same purpose, in the same Page; whence it appears, that these Councils, and Fathers, were for the Baptizing of Believers afore unbaptized, (as we still are) and also for the Baptism of their infants. So that as our Author hath shewed us, how to understand the Fathers, and consequently all other Pedo-Baptists, when they speak of Baptizing grown Persons, or of Prerequisites to their Baptism, so he hath rendred the summ of all his quotations, either out of the Fathers, or modern Pedo-Baptists, utterly insignificant and useless, as to his purpose: And how his pen comes thus to fall upon himself, and his own Cause, I shall desire

desire him to enquire, and leave all other men to judge.

Other instances of this nature might be taken notice of, as when he cites Dr. Owen to prove that that Promise Gen. 17. vers. 7. belongs only to the spiritual seed of Abraham Pag. 210. the Doctor saith *the effectual dispensation of the Covenant is peculiar to them only.* Plainly, implying that some grace is dispensed to others, though the effectual dispensation be peculiar to them, but let that suffice for the Second Consideration relating to his Authorities.

Thirdly, That which yet further is to be Considered, is the incredibility, and unregardableness of those Testimonies produced by him, that do more plainly, and expressly favour his assertions, and they are incredible and unregardable, either in regard of the Authors, or the Testimonies themselves.

First, Some are not at all to be Credited in regard of the Authors whose Testimonies they are: Thus for all those testimonies (excepting those taken out of their own writings, the uselessness of which we have already seen) cited to prove the *Waldenses* to be opposers of Infant Baptism. They are either the Testimonies of the Papists, their inveterate Enemies, or of Protestants only relating what the Papists charged them with; unto which Charges, themselves gave no Credit: though as to these last, our Author so sets down their Testimonies, as that his Reader may believe, they are the Testimonies of those Authors themselves, concerning these *Waldenses*, when as they only relate the Charges the Papists

loaded them with ; thus in his Pag. 286. says he, the *Magdeburgenses*, Cent. 11. Chap. 5. Pag. 240. tell us , that *Beringarius* did in the time of *Leo the Ninth.* about the Year 1049. publickly maintain his heresy, which they set down to be denying of transubstantiation, and Baptism to little ones. Now an incautelous Reader, would think these *Magdeburgenses* themselves, had set down these things to be *Beringarius* his heresies, when as they only tell us, what the Papists charged him with, the truth of which charge, themselves believed not. So again in his Pag. 290. says he, speaking of *Peter Bruis*, another worthy Minister amcng the *Waldenses*, whose Doctrines and Positions for which he suffered , we have recorded by the *Magdeburgenses* , and *Lucas Osiander* , among which, we find those about Baptism, &c.

Here again ordinary Readers unacquainted with these Histories, may think they set down these to be the Doctrines and Positions,for which this worthy man suffered, when as they only set down what the Papists charged him with. And what Credit is to be given to the Papists, let all men judge.

But it may be, it will be said they did not only charge them with denying of Infant-Baptism, but some of them at least wrote largely in Confutation of these Doctrines and Positions, and surely that they would never have done, unless they had certainly known them to hold and maintain them: To that I would only say ; I suppose our Author would think himself, and his party hardly dealt with, if all the Tenets and Practises charged upon them by some of their Opposers, and

in the confutation of which, and that as their Tenets and Practises they have largely written, should be believed as true of them. Would he be willing that men should believe that to Baptize naked is the ordinary practice of all, yea, or the generality of Anabaptists, because Mr. Baxter hath spent some pages, to shew the evil of that practice.

Alas, how common, yea too common is it for men, and that sometimes good men too, suddenly to take up ungrounded reports concerning the Opinions and Practises of those who dissent from them, and then apply themselves to a zealous confutation of such Opinions and Practises, alas, if such things may go for proof, who may not be proved to hold what their souls haye abhorred, or to reject what they have zealously asserted, and lived in the belief and practice of,

Secondly, Other of his Testimonies deserve no credit, or regard, in respect of the Testimonies themselves, thus to instance in those Testimonies produced out of Authors living since the Fifth Century, as *Willifrid*, *Strabo*, *Boemius*, *Ludovicus Vives*, or any other Contemporary with, or consequent unto them, to prove that Infant-Baptism was not practised in the primitive times, or first ages of the Church,

What ever they say of that import, yet no rational man can give any credit to their words, they producing no Authorities, offering no Reasons upon which they grounded their assertions. It is true, the last mentioned, viz. *Ludovicus Vives*, who saith as our Author relates his words, Pag. 88. and of whose Testimony great use is

made by the men of his persuasion, *that none were Baptized of old, but those that were of Age, who did not only understand what the mystery of the water meant, but desired the same*, he seems to have bottomed this Assertion upon a twofold ground.

First, That as he supposed they continued to Baptize the Adult in *Italy* even in his days.

Secondly, His other Ground seems to have been the proposal of Questions, (a custom then in use) unto Infants at their Baptism, which were answered by their Sureties for them : But now that these Grounds are too weak to bear his Assertion is evident. For ,

First, As for his first Ground, it was his mere mistake, there was no such practice of Baptizing the Adult, exclusive of Infants in *Italy* in his days, and therefore *Bellarmin* citing this passage out of *Ludovicus Vives*, leaves out this Ground, knowing ( himself being an Italian ) the falsity of it, as *Gerard* observes, *Tom. 4. Pag. 119.*

Secondly, For his other Ground , it proves nothing, in as much as that custom of proposing Questions to Infants had its rise , not from the way of procedure in primitive times towards the seed of believing Parents, as grown up, but from the custom of interrogating the Adult, converted from among the heathen, antecedent to their Baptism; whereunto some conceive the Apostle Peter alludes, when Infants were also Baptized: So that as he had no true Ground for his Assertion, so the other, whose Testimonies are of the same import, offer no ground, for what they do assert; we have only their bare words ; how they

came to know what they affirm, they tell us not; and that they had indeed no real Ground for what they say, is sufficiently evident from what hath been already said, and will more fully appear hereafter.

Now, who can give any credit to a few obscure Authors, when they have only their naked Assertions without any shew of proof, and for which, it evidently appears they had no Ground. Now then, considering our Authors great unfaithfulness in reference to his Authorities, the apparent uselessness and insignificancy of so great a part of them, as to his purpose; the incredibility and unregardableness of others, that speak more home and full to his purpose; surely the great variety and multiplicity of his Quotations, cannot much move any rational or unbiassed persons. And hence, to add any thing more with reference to them may seem superfluous, yet let me just mention two things more.

And therefore Fourthly, Consider, which our Author himself calls us to do, of how little force humane Testimonies are, for the weakening or establishing any Doctrine or Practice in the minds and Judgments of those, in whom that prophecy takes place, *they shall wait for the Law at his (id est) Christ's Mouth.* *Si quid dicitur absque scriptura claudicat auditorum cogitatio,* saith Chrysostom, and that of Austin is known, *alios ita lego, ut quantumlibet sanctitate, doctrinaque præpolliant, non adeo verum putem quia ipsi ita senserunt, sed quia mihi vel per illos Autores canonicos, vel probabilitate quod à veritate non abhorreant persuadere potuerunt.* And surely to note it by the way, nei-

ther of these would take up Infant-Baptism merely as a tradition : It is Divine Authority that can only establish the minds of sincere Christians ; the Judgment of this or that man is of no great weight to those who have chosen Christ, as their teacher, and Governour, as well as their Priest to save them. It is true, in matters of Fact, credible witnesses are to be regarded, and in doubtful cases, it gives no little ease to the mind, to be credibly informed in the practice of the Church throughout all Ages past.

Lastly, Let it be considered, that would we appeal to, and put the decision of the present controversie into the hands of humane Authors, how infallibly it would be determined on our side; for this I dare appeal to Mr. *Danvers* himself, at least to his book. But to pass from this, from what hath been said, It evidently appears to how little purpose our Author hath bestowed so great pains; and that at last, as he and all that expect satisfaction in and about the practice Controverted, must, so we freely do appeal from Humane to Divine Testimonies. And answerably, I shall proceed to the examination of what he hath said from Scripture in confirmation of the one, and the other of his Assertions.

## C H A P. II.

Wherein his Six Particulars, to prove that the Baptism of Believers is only Christ's Ordinance of Baptism, are examined their Weakness and Vanity fully discovered.

The First is this, (viz.) That the Baptizing of Believers, is only to be esteemed Christ's Ordinance of Baptism, this he attempts to prove.

1. From Christ's positive institution and Commission commanding of it; and having recited the words of the Commission, he concludes, *Here we have this plain order of Christ laid down.*

1. That men should be taught the doctrine of Faith.

2. That being so taught they should be baptized.

3. That they should in his School or Church, whereof they are then made members, be instructed in every thing else they ought to learn.

With reference unto which, I may say in Job's words to his friend Bildad: How hast thou helped him that has no power? How savest thou the arm that hath no strength? Job 26. 2. Can our Author think that the bare recital of a Text of Scripture, that hath been answered over and over, again and again with a crude, *where we have this plain order of Christ laid down,* can satisfie an impartial enquiring mind, that

Baptism

Baptism must necessarily, and that universally be administred exactly according to this order here laid down? Surely it concerns those that will plead the Cause of Believers Baptism, in opposition to that of Infants, both to shew the insufficiency of those answers given, and also evince the necessary exclusion of Infants from Baptism by this Commission, as exprest and laid down in the order insisted upon. May such insipid repetitions, and crude assertions determine Controversies; those whose lot it is to speak last, will infallibly carry the Cause, and have the Truth determined on their side: whence I might fairly dismiss this his first particular, with only this reply: 'Tis fully answered already. But though I have largely spoken to the arguings of our opponents from

Infants Baptism from heaven pag. 288. pag. 290. this Commission elsewhere; yet because they insist so much upon it, and seem to think that the bare recital of it is sufficient to establish their practice; I shall consider it a little further, and lay down a threefold conclusion with reference to it.

1. That this Commission (Institution, it is not) taken abstractly in it self: does not necessarily exclude Infants from Baptism: And if it do not necessarily exclude them, they may be Baptized ( supposing their Baptism elsewhere in Scripture warranted ) notwithstanding our Lord Christ has exprest himself as he has done; and that this Commission does not necessarily exclude Infants from Baptism is sufficiently evident these two ways.

1. From the general acknowledgement of our opposers themselves; they Universally, for ought I have yet understood from any of them, profess that in case Infant-Baptism could be clearly proved from any other place of Scripture, they would readily own, and practice it: which would be absurd, in case this Commission did necessarily limit Baptism to Believers: For that would be to suppose that the Scriptures might warrant a practice in contradiction to themselves. And how vain is the bare recital of a Scripture, which themselves grant does not necessarily prove, what it is produced for the proof of.

2. This is evident, because as here is no express mention of Infants; So no Word, Phrase or Clause, that can be rationally interpreted, as necessarily excluding them. I know it will be said, *That our Lord Christ not mentioning of them, together with the order exprest, for the administration of baptism, is sufficient ground to conclude that they were excluded.* But to that, I answer, That that is no sufficient ground to conclude they are excluded, will undeniably appear from a double consideration.

1. That it is possible Christ may have given this Commission, only with reference to the adult, and may have sufficiently declared his will concerning the Baptism of Infants, in other parts of his word: which suppose we should affirm he has; As our opposers would have *the order pleaded for, exactly observed by us;* so no prejudice would arise to our Cause thereby, seeing our only enquiry then must be, whether Christ has in

in any part of his word warranted the Baptism of Infants. For I suppose no man will deny that Christ may declare his mind, as to the administration of Baptism, to some in one part of his word; and his Mind and Will as to its administration unto others in another. Whence it is undeniable, that Infants are not necessarily excluded from Baptism by this Commission. Suppose they are not included in it; yet its impossible to evince their exclusion by it, seeing it is possible it may wholly respect Subjects of a different Species. But

2. That our Lord Christ might not, as it is certain he did not intend this Commission, as fully and absolutely directive of his Apostles and Ministers in the Administration of these Ordinances of Preaching and Baptizing, unto the administration of which they are in the general commissioned and appointed: 'Tis no way necessary; (neither can I think our opposers will dare to affirm that it is.) that our Lord Christ should expressly declare his whole mind in any part of his word, no not in the Commission it self, for the administration of them: Concerning the administration of any of his Ordinances, he may give out a more general Commission warranting their Administration and yet further Directions elsewhere, relating both to the administrators, manner of Administration, and Subjects to whom they are to be Administred. And hence it will undeniably follow, though Infants are not expressly mentioned in this Commission, yet they may be included and comprehended in it. Because though the Will of Christ concerning them,  
is.

is not plainly here declared; yet it may be found among the various further directions he has elsewhere given, relating to the administration of those two Ordinances, of Preaching, and Baptizing: And that our Lord Christ never intended this Commission, as fully directive of the Apostles and Ministers of the Gospel in the execution of it, is fully evident from the indeterminableness of all questions and cases relating to the right administration of the fore-mentioned Ordinances by the Commission it self, I shall instance in these Five or Six,

1. How the Nations were to be *Discipled*, whether only by teaching them, or by Baptizing them? Some have thought (whose Judgment yet I approve not) that Baptism is appointed as the means by which the Nations should be Discipled or made Disciples; and plenty of instances may be brought to shew that the participle is frequently used to denote the means by which any end is accomplished, and why it may not be so used here, our Opposers will be hard put to it to evince from the Commission it self.

2. Who among the Nations or among those to whom the Gospel is preached, ought to be accounted Disciples, and as such the proper subjects of Baptism? We know what a contest has been among some, what that Faith or Embrace-ment of the Gospel is that qualifies men for Baptism, neither is it possible for our opposers to determine that question from the commission it self.

3. Whether the Nations were to be Baptized as discipled, or as men? Neither does this question

stion admit of an easie decision from the commission it self, (though from other Scriptures it does) seeing that Pronoun, them, does evidently refer to Nations as its proper antecedent, whether we  
 pag. 291. translate μαδιντδ' ζετε, teach or make  
 disciples as has been elsewhere proved.

4. After what manner Baptism ought to be administered, whether by dipping, or by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the face or body of the Party Baptized : That Baptism be administered after a right manner, *our Author* looks upon as essential to that Ordinance, and consequently that a defect therein nullifies it, and makes it no Ordinance of Christ ; yet that the word used in the Commission does not determine what the manner should be, is certain past all rational exception. *Our Author* must unavoidably take the assistance of other Scriptures, for the determining that controversie, and yet must leave it in *medio* when he has done.

5. Whether only Males, or both Males and Females should be Baptized is not express in, neither is it determinable from the Commission it self, &υτδς translated *them* being of the masculine gender, may seem to restrain Baptism, only to Males, and is as clear a ground, for excluding Females, as the order laid down by Christ is for the excluding of Infants.

6. Whether Adult Persons only upon their Discipleship, or they and their Infant seed with them, are the proper Subjects of Baptism ; and seeing that we must of necessity have recourse to other revelations that our Lord Christ has made of his Will, relating to these two Ordinances of

Preaching, and Baptizing, for the determining the Five former questions or cases. Let our Author, or any other shew any solid reason, why we may not do the same for the determining this last, which I shall expect *ad Grecas calendas*. From what hath been said, it undenyably appears that this Commission, as abstractly taken in it self, is not a full and compleat direction for the right discharge of those duties, it doth more generally authorize and require the performance of. Whence will follow, as shining with a noon-like light, the truth of this first conclusion, That the Commission does not exclude, but on the other hand may include the Baptism of Infants, though they are not mentioned in it, yet the Will of our Lord Christ concerning them may be, as we affirm it is, sufficiently declared in those other rules and directions, relating to the due discharge of it. And this First Conclusion (the truth of which appearing with so much clearness of evidence) does so fully answer and obviate all arguments and objections pleadable from this Commission, against the practice we contend for, that I might well dismiss this first Argument without any further reply. But if any shall yet say surely if it had been the Will of our Lord Christ, that Infants should have been Baptized, he would have plainly declared it.

*Answ.* To that I answer, that it was vastly more necessary, that seeing it was his Will that Females as well as Males should be Baptized, he should have plainly expressed that; and yet we see he hath not done it. Yea, let me say, of which more hereafter, that in case it had been the will

32 Infant-baptism from Heaven,  
of our Lord Christ, that Infants should not be  
Baptized; it had been much more necessary that  
he should have plainly declared that; than, it being  
his Will they should be Baptized; it was necessary  
he should plainly declare that: So that there is  
no reason why it should seem strange to any that  
upon supposition of its being the Will of Christ,  
that Infants should be Baptized, yet he hath not  
plainly exprest it in the Commission. We see  
there are other things that it is as necessary, yea,  
and more necessary, that they should have been  
plainly exprest, and yet they are not; yea, the  
very not mentioning Infants, does strongly im-  
ply his Will that they should be Baptized, in as  
much as had it been his Will that they should  
not be Baptized, it had been vastly more necessa-  
he should have clearly exprest it, than it being  
his will they should, he should plainly exprest  
that. But for the further satisfying of this scru-  
ple, I shall lay down a Second Conclusion.

2. That our Lord Christ having else-where so  
fully reveiled his will concerning the Infant-seed  
of his people, both as to their interest in the Co-  
venant, and right to the seal and token thereof;  
the Commission though not expressly mentioning  
them, yet does sufficiently warrant and authorize  
the Ministers of the Gospel to Baptize them, as  
well as the Adult upon their profession of Faith.  
For the clearing up and illustration of this, let  
either of these two suppositions be put.

1. That God had sent his Prophets or any of  
them, having the first Testament administration, to  
preach the Gospel, as then reveiled unto the hea-  
thens or any Nation among them in order unto  
the

the uniting of them to, or incorporation of them in the Jewish Church: Or,

2. That he had continued Circumcision under the Gospel Administration, either of which things he might have done, had it so pleased him. Now I would ask any rational man, whether this very Commission, only substituting Circumcision in the room of Baptism, had not sufficiently warranted the Circumcision of Infants as well as grown persons, though they had not been expressly mentioned? had it not been enough to have said, Go Teach or Disciple all Nations, and let them be circumcised to the Lord? would any in either of these cases have scrupled whether Infants should have been circumcised upon that ground, that their Circumcision was not expressly mentioned? Surely no scruple in either of these cases would have ever entred into the hearts of men: And why any scruple should now arise seeing the Covenant is one and the same, only there is a substitution of Baptism in the room of Circumcision, as the sign or token of it, no satisfactory account can be given. But yet to make things more plain let me put this one supposition more.

Suppose our Lord Christ had in more words express himself in this Commission thus, *Go teach or disciple all Nations baptizing them, for the Covenant with the promises thereof, shall now be extended to, and established with both the Jews and Gentiles and their households, in special their Children, as it hath hitherto been to and with the Jews in special:* Had he thus express himself, he had not come much short of mentioning Infants: Why,

let but Scriptures be compared together, and it is tantamount, it is all one as if he had so express himself. Says Peter to those awakened Jews, *Repent and be Baptized, for the promise is to you and your children*: Says Paul to a Gentile, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.* Now lay the words of these two Apostles together, and suppose them spoken by either of them, at one and the same time, and that both to Jews and Gentiles, alike awakened to a sense of their sin and misery ; and it had been all one as if he should have said, *Repent and believe, and thereby become the disciples of Christ, and be baptized, for then the promise of Salvation is to you, that is, it does appertain to you and to your children and households.* And these words, as thus spoken, must needs be spoken by virtue and in pursuance of the Commission they had received from Christ, and consequently they must needs have warrant from the Commission thus to speak. From whence it undeniably follows, that so much is virtually included in the Commission : And it is all one as if Christ had express himself in the Commission, in the very words or to the sense afore declared. And what attempts our opposers make to obscure the evidence that these Scriptures taken singly and severally give to the practice of Infant-baptism ; the same they might as rationally have made, in case our Lord Christ had so express himself in the Commission : Let truth appear never so plainly some will cavil against it. But possibly some will yet say, If Infants should be Baptized, then the Order of Christ is crossed.

*Answe.* To this I shall say only in the general, that Christs order cannot be crossed by the observation of those rules and directions himself has given for the guidance of his Ambassadors, in the discharge of that duty required in this Commission; as the Baptism of Women no way opposes the mind of Christ, he having elsewhere given direction for their Baptism, though this Commission, according to the letter, only respects men; so the Baptism of Infants no way crosses Christs order, he having elsewhere declared his Will that they should be Baptized, though according to the letter the Commission might seem only to respect the Adult. But that I may give more full satisfaction to this objection, I shall lay down a third Conclusion.

*Conclus. 3.* That notwithstanding it is the will of Christ that Infants should be Baptized, yet it was very rational, yea necessary, that he should express this Commission in and according to the order he hath done. For let but three things be considered.

1. What was the state and condition of the Nations to whom the Apostles were now sent; they were in a state of darkness and ignorance, wholly estranged from God and his ways. Hence the preaching of the Gospel antecedently to the administration of Baptism was absolutely necessary: The Parents must be discipled before Baptism could be regularly administred, either to themselves or to their Children.

2. Consider the gradual procedure the Gospel should, and answerably has made in subduing the Nations unto Christ; there always has been and

still is some Nations to be discipled and brought home to Christ, and all attempts to disciple them and bring them unto Christ, must be by first preaching the Gospel to them: The discipleship of Parents, still preparing the way to their own and their Childrens Baptism. Hence this Commission as express according to this order was necessary, not only for the Apostles who were to begin the work of discipling the Nations, but for all Ministers in succeeding ages, as they should be called out to perfect that work.

3. Consider, that when Nations are discipled, yet the preaching of the Gospel has a precedence to the administration of Baptism; the seed of believers Baptized in their Infancy, must be taught and thereby brought to a sincere embracement and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, into which as the seed of such Parents they were afore received in order to their conveying unto their Children a right to the Covenant, and Baptism as the seal and token thereof. Now then let but these three Conclusions be laid together, and I shall freely appeal to all rational men, whether this Commission can with any shew of reason be interpreted as restraining Baptism to Believers only, to the exclusion of their Infant-seed. We see the Commission does not necessarily exclude Infants; it does sufficiently warrant their Baptism, though they are not expressly mentioned; and it was necessary, though the Will of Christ be that they should be Baptized, yet that he should express the Commission according to the order he has done. But to proceed.

2. Our Author argues from the Apostles doctrine: And

3. To

3. To joyn these two arguments together, from the Example and Practice of the Primitive Saints, the sum of both which arguments amounts to thus much:

If the Apostles in their Doctrine did teach, that believers should be Baptized, and there is no instance to be found of any other teaching; and in conformity to this Doctrine, many Believers are recorded to be baptized, and no instance of any Infants; then believers Baptism is only Christs Ordinance of Baptism: But the antecedent is true, therefore the consequent.

*Answe.* To which I would only say four things.

1. That the Apostles did in their doctrine teach that the promise of salvation did belong, and consequently that the Covenant of Grace, in which that promise is contained, is still extended to the Houses or Families of believers, and that as such:

2. That they did exhort persons to be Baptized upon that account, that the promise did belong to them: And if some ought to be Baptized upon the account of their interest in the promise, then all that have a like interest in the promise may be Baptized upon the account of that their interest. These two things have been sufficiently proved elsewhere. And hence, though the Apostles did not in express terms teach Infant-baptism, yet their Doctrine does necessarily imply it.

Infant-Baptism  
from Heaven  
Chap. 6. See  
also Chap. 10.  
pag. 262. to  
271.

3. That they did Baptize whole households; and that sometimes such in which we read not of any converted save only the Heads or Chief Governors, which, especially considering the two

foregoing particulars, makes it vastly more probable, that they did baptize some Infants, than the silence of the Scriptures, as to particular instances of Infants being baptized, that they did not baptize them. When the Apostles shall positively assert that the promises of the Covenant do belong to the houses of Believers, and that as such; and then in their doctrine lay interest in the promise as a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism; and now shall baptize several households, in some of which there is no intimation that any were Believers, save only the Heads or chief of them. Surely here is a vastly more probable ground to conclude, that as in their doctrine they did teach, so they did practice Infant-baptism, than the Scriptures barely not recording the Baptism of any Infants, is to conclude that they did not. Why may not the Scriptures not mentioning the faith of the household, be as strong an argument to prove that some in such households had not a personal Faith, as their not mentioning the Baptism of Infants is to prove that no Infants were baptized. But to pass that

4. That the Scriptures not recording that the Apostles did preach or practice Infant-Baptism, is no argument to prove that they did not both preach and practise it: Could our Author have produced any one Scripture wherein the Apostles in their doctrine did exclude Infants from Baptism, or in their practice did refuse to Baptize them, he had said somewhat to his purpose; and till that can be done, the multiplication of Scriptures, which alone concern the Baptism of believers, signify just nothing; inasmuch as they might teach

teach and administer Baptism, as is declared in those Scriptures, and yet teach the doctrine of, and practise Infant-baptism also.

4. *Our Author* further argues from the spiritual ends and uses of Baptism : And thus he seems to argue, If believers are only capable of the Spiritual ends, and uses of Baptism, then they are the only proper Subject of Baptism ; but the Antecedent is true, therefore so is the Consequent.

*Answ.* Would he have concluded any thing to his purpose by this argument, he should have proved at least one of these two things.

1. That Infants are not capable of any of these ends with reference unto which Baptism is appointed Or : else,

2. That none ought to be baptized, unless capable of all the end and uses for which Baptism is appointed : but neither of these things does he or can he rationally affirm ; and hence this argument signifies as little as any of his former. I shall therefore wave the particular Consideration of those several ends and uses of Baptism mentioned by him, and only in brief prove these two things. Only remember that at present my work is not to prove Infant-baptism, only to shew the insufficiency and weakness of this argument, taken from the uses and ends of Baptism, to prove that none ought to be Baptized but only believers.

1. That infants are capable of some of the uses and ends with reference unto which Baptism is appointed. The truth of this will appear above any rational doubt, by the bare men-

1. To seal confirm and ratify the Covenant, with the Promises thereof, unto those with whom it is established : And.

2. To give those a solemn admission into the visible Church, who have an antecedent right thereunto : that these are two of the grand ends and uses of Baptism has been elsewhere proved, and is granted by our Author himself. Now that infants are capable of both these ends and uses of Baptism is past all rational doubt. If God has extended his Covenant to them, why may he not seal, confirm and ratify it unto them by an outward sign and token ? if it be his will they should have a place in his Church or Family, why may they not be solemnly admitted thereunto by Baptism ; But not to spend time in the prooфе of that which no body will or can deny. Therefore.

2. That Infants may be baptized, as capable of some, though it should be granted that they are incapable of other, of the ends and uses of Baptism ; this is secured, both by the acknowledgment of *our opposers themselves* and it's own light and evidence from any opposition, especially from them. *Our Authour affirms* ( how truely may be seen after ) That Circumcision was applyed to *Abraham* for such uses and ends of which none of his seed were capable, so both Mr. *Tombes* and himself ( with what consistency with his own Principles *ipse viderit* : ) acknowledge that Circumcision did represent and signify Heart-circumcision, which

it could no more do to Infants; then Baptism can Regeneration, yet that hindred not its application unto them: And if Circumcision, the former token of the Covenant might be applied to Infants as capable of some, though incapable of other ends and uses, with reference unto which it was appointed, why it may not be so with Baptism no rational account can be given: yea, though we set aside their respective reference to the Covenant as the Signs and Tokens thereof; if one Ordinance may be appointed for, and applyed to several Subjects with reference to several ends and uses, some of which all the Subjects are capable of, others only some of them, why may it not be so with any other Ordinance? But further; That our Lord Christ may appoint the application of Baptism to Infants, as capable of some of the ends and uses of it, though it should be granted they are not capable of others, is undeniable from the sole consideration of his sovereign Lordship over his owne house: It's true, could it be Proved that they are simply and absolutely incapable, of any of the ends and uses of Baptism, it were rational to conclude our Lord Christ had not appointed its application to them: But to grant that Infants are capable of some, yea the main and Principal Ends and uses of Baptism, and yet to argue against their Baptism meerly from their incapability of other ends and uses of it; as it is a wild way of arguing, so it not a little reflects upon the sovereign Power and Authority of him from whose mouth it is the duty of all mortals to

*wait for the Law.* Will he appoint Baptism to be applied to them for such ends as they are capable of, though they should be incapable of others, who may say unto him, *what doest thou?*

5. The difference between the New and Old Testament-dispensation is urged as another Argument to prove that the Baptism of Believers is only Christs Ordinance of Baptism. And there is a two-fold difference assigned by *our Author* between the Old and New Testament-dispensations. The first respects the Subjects, or Persons of whom the Church under the first Testament was, and under the New is constituted and made up: Under the first Testament they were, saies he, *the fleshy seed of Abraham*, whom he conceives might, and that as such without a personal work of Regeneration be admitted into, and continued then in the Church. Hence that Church was only a *Carnal Church*, as he speaks, pag. 221. But now the Subjects, or Persons of which the Church under the New Testament is and ought to be constituted and made up, are and ought to be *professed Believers*, and consequently visibly the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*.

2. The other Difference he assigns between these two Dispensations respects the Worship, then and now to be tendered up unto God; Then he conceives the Worship both in respect of the Matter of it, and Meanes or outward Ordinances, in and by which it was to be performed, was suitable to the nature of the Church; as the Church was a Carnal Church, so the Worship was external, performed in and by carnal Ordinance: They

*then*

then, says he, had a *Worldly Sanctuary, Carnal Ordinances, a temporal Priesthood, and a multitude of Ceremonies*: but now under the New Testament, it is, says he, otherwise, now the *Worship is spiritual and the Ordinances are spiritual; and this worship must be offered up to God by an unchangeable Priesthood*. And hence he conceives, that however Infants might be admitted into the Church under the Old Testament, yet now they ought not: Now 'tis most meet and suitable, that only a spiritual Seed should attend the spiritual Worship, and spiritual Ordinances.

*Answ.* As for this Change made in the new Testament-dispensation, whereby it differs from the Old, as it respects the worship to be performed, whether in regard of the matter of it, or the Ordinances in and by which it is to be performed, how either Infants or their Baptism should be concerned in it, is impossible to imagine; they are as capable to the full of holding Communion with the Church now in spiritual Ordinances, and to offer up a spiritual worship by an unchangeable Priesthood, as they were to hold communion with that carnal Church, as *our Author* calls it, or to partake of those carnal Ordinances, or to worship God by that temporary Priesthood: That is, they neither were nor are capable of the one nor the other: And then how their Baptism or Church-membership, should be any way concerned in this change, *our Author* neither does nor can shew; neither can I well think that himself did think these things would signifie any thing to any rational man: But these terms and phrases of worldly Sanctuary, carnal Ordinances, &c. might

44      Infant baptism from Heaven,  
might excite passions in persons of weaker Judg-  
ments, and thereby his Cause might be somewhat  
promoted among such. And therefore that which  
we are here alone concerned in, is this change  
in the New Testament dispensation, whereby it  
differs from that under the Old Testament, as it  
respects the subjects or persons of which the  
Church then and now was and is to be constitu-  
ted and made up of. And this we absolutely de-  
ny, that the New Testament dispensation does so  
differ as is here supposed from the Old: We ab-  
solutely deny that fleshly descent from *Abraham*  
was a sufficient ground for the admitting or con-  
tinuing any in the Church under the Old Testa-  
ment beyond his Children, immediately descend-  
ing from his own loins: But the Church was  
then as now to be constituted; or to consist only  
of *Abraham's* spiritual or mystical seed inclusive  
of their Infants; and consequently that Church  
was a spiritual Church or Corporation as the  
Gospel Church is. We grant that a greater mea-  
sure of the spirit, is granted to the Church, un-  
der the New Testament, than was under the  
Old; and answerably the true and sincere mem-  
bers have, or at least may have, spiritual life *in*  
*more abundance*, as our Lord Christ speaks, than  
the members of the Church ordinarily then had.  
But as then there were some hypocrites, so there  
is still: So as now the Church according to divine  
appointment, ought to consist of visible Believ-  
ers, among whom some are sincere, so it was  
then. In a word, as there was a mixture of  
*Wheat and Chaff in the floor of Christ* then, so there  
is still: But the Church then, might and ought  
to

to be denominated a spiritual Church or House as it may and ought to be now. So that the New Testament dispensation, differs not at all from the Old ; in regard of the matter or subjects the Church is constituted or made up of ; they were then the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, including their Infants, and so they are still. This shall be further manifest when I come to the resolution of that question, Whether Circumcision was administered to Believers as Believers, and to their seed as such? But yet let me here offer these two Arguments to prove that the New Testament dispensation, does not so differ, in respect of the matter or subjects of the Church, from the Old, as is pretended.

1. If the same attributes may be, and are by the Holy Ghost himself, given to the Church, under the Old Testament, that may be and are given to the Church under the New, then the New Testament dispensation, as it respects the matter or subjects of the Church, does not so differ as is pretended from the Old : But the antecedent is true, therefore the consequent.

That the antecedent is true (*viz.*) that the same attributes, may be and are by the Holy Ghost himself given to the Church under the Old Testament, that may be and are given to the Church under the New, is undeniable, by comparing *Exod. 19.5,6.* with *1 Pet. 2.9.* As the Church now is a peculiar people unto God; so it was then: As it is now a royal Priesthood; so it was then: As it is now an holy Nation; so it was then.

And from the Holy Ghost's thus giving the same attributes to the Church then; that are given to the Church now, it will undeniably follow,

low, that there is no such change made in the New Testament dispensation as is pretended. Can that Church be denominated a carnal Church any more than the Gospel-Church may, when it was a *peculiar people, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation*, as well as the Church now is. But

2. If the Church under the first Testament was the mystical Body of Christ into which Believers under the New Testament are incorporated, and as so incorporated make up and continue the same mystical Body of Christ in the world; then the New Testament dispensation, as it respects the matter or subjects of the Church, does not differ as is pretended from the old: But the former is true, therefore the latter: The antecedent is undenyable from that *Ephes. 3. 6.* from whence the conclusion will necessarily follow. But of this more hereafter. From what has been said, we evidently see, there is no such change of dispensation as our Author supposes, and answerably this argument is of no force at all: And hence for what he after nonsensically talks of *John* discharging that privilege of *Abraham's* natural seed that admitted into the old Church, from any such Rite in the New, it signifies nothing, be his meaning what it will: *John* did not discharge them from any privilege they afore had, only rectifies a mistake they afore lay under. But

6. Our Author endeavours to confirm believers Baptism to be the only true Baptism, from the constitution of the Primitive Churches, They were, says he, framed not of ignorant Babes, but of professing men and women: And this, as he judges, is further evidenced, by the dedication of the Epistles sent

sent to the Churches, as well as the contents of the same.

*Answ.* This Argument presupposes, and takes for granted, that which is by many, if not by most, denied (*viz.*) That Infants either by Baptism are or at least immediately upon their Baptism ought to be admitted as members into particular Churches; hence it only concerns such as are of that persuasion. I shall only say these two things.

1. That Infants Baptism may be sufficiently proved, though that be, as surely it may very rationally be denied; hence unless *our Author* can prove, which he attempts not; (he is better at begging than proving; whence it may be said to him in the Poets words.

— τοὶ μυδοὶ φίλοι ἄκετοι εἰσίν.)

I was saying, unless he can prove that Infant-baptism does necessarily suppose, and require that they are either by or immediately upon their Baptism to be admitted as members into particular Churches, his Arguments signify just nothing at all.

2. Suppose we should grant him that, yet to say no more, his proofs are wholly insufficient: Infants might be admitted as members of particular Churches, notwithstanding what he saith concerning the Order directed to in Christ's Commission, and what we read concerning the Apostles observation of that direction; or the unconcernedness of Infants, both in the dedications and contents of the Epistles sent to the Churches.

As for the Commission, and the Apostles Practice,

Since I have already shewd the insufficiency of the one and the other, to prove believers to be the only true subjects of Baptism : I shall therefore only touch upon the unconcernedness of Infants in the dedication of the Epistles sent to the Churches, or in the Epistles themselves,

Unto which I would say, If our Author judged that that Argument to prove Infant-baptism, drawn from their federal holiness deserves the left hand, it being so lately, not above an hundred and twenty years ago, brought to light, he has no reason to be angry, if we give somewhat the less heed to this Argument, to disprove the Church members-hip of Infants, seeing it is as I suppose, of a much later date, and comes short of that Argument, in point of antiquity, not less than an hundred and eighteen years. But for the Argument it self, I would only ask our Author these two Questions,

1. Whether Infants were more concerned in the prophecies and writings of the Prophets, than Infants are in the Epistles written to the Church? yet they were members of the Church then.

2. Whether he supposes, that the Apostles would have express themselves, otherwise than they have, had Infants been members of the Churches ? But not to waste time upon such trifles; by what has been said, ( for I shall say no more than what I have done to his humane Authority which makes up his seventh Argument ) I say we may see what poor grounds the Antipedobaptists have for their first assertion (*viz.*) that Believers Baptism is only Christ's Ordinance of Baptism. I proceed now to his second.

## C H A P. III.

Wherein the Author's two First Particulars to disprove Infant-baptism are considered ; with reference unto which two things remarked ; a full Enquiry made , whether what silence may be truly predicated either of the Scripture or Antiquity , concerning that practice , does not more tend to its establishment than overthrow . The Affirmative fully proved .

THat I may hasten to the vindication of those Scripture Grounds which Pedobaptists have laid for their judgment and practice from the attempts of our Author to raise , at least darken and obscure them , (which is that I principally intend ) I shall take the two first Arguments or Considerations he hath laid down for the disproof of Infant-baptism together ; the former of which is drawn from the supposed total silence of the Scriptures ; the latter from the alike total silence of Antiquity about the practice .

This First Consideration he thus expresseth . If Infant-baptism had been an appointment or ordinance of Jesus Christ , there would have been some precept , Command or example in Scripture to warrant the same : But inasmuch as the Scripture is so wholly silent therein , there being not one syllable to be found in all the New Testament about any such

34 Infant-baptism from Heaven,  
practice, it may be concluded to be no Ordinance of  
Jesus Christ.

His second is thus exprest. The next thing we shall make appear is, that as there was no Scripture Authority to inforce it, so there was no humane Authority to enjoyn it till above four hundred years after Christ. And in pursuance of this latter Argument, he undertakes not only to shew the silence of Antiquity as to this practice, but over and above to shew the time when, the persons by whom, and the ends for which it was instituted and brought into the Church; wherein had his success been proportionable to his confidence, he had done something considerable, and should (I dare boldly say) have had many hearty thanks from the most zealous assertors of Infant-baptism themselves; and indeed he had well deserved it: but (alas!) how hath he failed, and who can do that which is impossible to be done? Impossibilities will nonplus the wisest and ablest of men, let their diligence and industry be never so great; and therefore it hath been usually said, *Impossibilium nullus est conatus*. Wise men cease endeavours where impossibilities appear: But more directly to my purpose with reference to both these considerations, I shall first remark two things.

Secondly, Inquire, whether what may be truly said of the silence of the Scriptures and Antiquity about the practice supposed, do not make it vastly more probable, that Infants ought, than that they ought not to be Baptized.

First, That which I would remark is, how little *our Author* hath done for the promoting the Cause he hath ingaged in; by all that he hath said

said in pursuance of these two Arguments : As for the Scriptures, that they are so silent as he pretends, hath been sufficiently evidenced elsewhere, and may be further shewed hereafter : As for his various quotations, whereby he would make his Reader believe, either that so many Pædobaptists have acknowledged the silence of the Scriptures ; or that so many have affirmed that the Adult alone were baptized in the first Ages of the Church : What regard is to be had to them may also appear from what hath been already said, and shall immediately be further considered. I shall therefore at present only a little review the account he gives us of the *time when, the persons by whom, and the ends for which,* the Baptizing of Infants was (*as he saith*) instituted and brought into the Church. And thus the whole account he gives us, we have compri-  
zed in about fourteen lines at the lower end of his 114 and the upper end of his 115 Pages, and 5 or 6 lines at the lower end of his 117 Page. In brief it is this : *It is true, saith he, towards the latter end of this Century* (that is the fourth Cen-  
tury) *it is said, that in some parts of Africa, they did Baptize children,* and quotes the Magdeburgenses for it ; *and that some of the Greek Church did begin to approve of it.* Gregory Nazianzen is said to admit Infants to be Baptized in case of necessity. And then he further adds, Jerome is said to incline to it also, after Origen and Cyprian ; then in his 117 Page tells us, that speaking of the Fifth Century, *that was the Age wherein Infant-Baptism did receive its sanction by the decrees of Popes and Councils.* Here's the All that our Au-

uthor, after his utmost enquiry into Antiquity, can say about the time when, and the persons by whom Infant-baptism was Instituted. And how well he hath performed his great undertaking let all judge. As for the time when Infant-baptism had its first rise, he leaves us wholly in the dark ; for though he talk at random of its being practised by some in Africa about the latter end of the fourth Century, yet himself grants it was practised long before that time : for he tells us before, (page 62.) that *Tertullian opposed himself by several arguments against some that affirmed Infant-baptism.* Secondly, he quotes both *Chrysostom* and *Austin*, who (as hath been before taken notice of) were contemporary with Pope *Innocent* and lived in that very age, wherein he would insinuate Infant-baptism received its first sanction, as affirming that then it was the universal practice of the whole Church, and hath been so time out of mind.

3. He himself intimates that both *Origen* and *Cyprian* did, if not practice, yet incline to it, for so are his words; *Jerome is said to encline to it, after Origen and Cyprian*: so that *Origen* and *Cyprian* did incline to it, and that they did not only incline to it but also practise it, is sufficiently evidenced by other hands. Yea,

4. Himself denies not that it was practised before, only saith, there was no humane Authority to enjoyn it till above four hundred years after Christ. Which signifies just nothing. And

5. Let me add this one Observation more, that *Pelagius*, in all his contests with *Austin* about Original sin, durst never deny Infant-baptism, though

though it had highly subserved his interest to have done it; seeing that practice was made so great use of by *Austin* for the confirmation of the doctrine of Original sin opposed by him, and the reason is given by *Austin* himself: *Pelagianos non fuisse ausos negare Baptismum parvolorum quod viderint nimis aperte cum Ecclesiâ totâ pugnandum fuisse, si eum negarent:*

Se Gerhard de Baptismo pag.  
576.

An undeniable evidence that Infant-

baptism was then universally practised, and had been so for ought what then appeared, from the Apostles days: For could he have proved that it had been an innovation, and not the practice of the Church from the Apostles days, he would undoubtedly have done it; his cause being so nearly concerned in it.

Now can *our Author*, or any others think, (nay doth he not expressly grant the contrary) that that could be the age wherein Infant-baptism had its first rise? So that we are yet for ought what *our Author* hath said, utterly at a loss about the time when it was instituted.

As for the persons by whom it was instituted, here we are at as great a loss, as we are at about the time. Indeed he tells us in some parts of *Africa*, they did Baptize Children; this was in the Fourth Century; but he tells us not who they were, and consequently the Authors of Infant-baptism are yet to seek; and besides, these were not the first that Baptized Children, as appears from what he saith of *Tertullian*: So that it is evident not only some among the Africans and some among the Greeks, but some among the Latins, yea the universal Church, and that before the Fourth

Century, did Baptize Children. And as for those Fathers, *yiz.* *Gregory, Nazianzen, and Jerome*, as he doth not affirm them to be the inventors of Infant-baptism, only saith they inclined to it; so it is certain they were not, it being, as confessed by himself, the universal practice of the Church in their days: So that *our Author* himself is wholly at a loss about the time when, and the persons by whom Infant-baptism was instituted: We cannot therefore derive its original from men, we must say it is *from heaven and not of men*.

As for the end for which he supposeth it to be instituted, if he assign any, it is the taking away of Original sin. But seeing neither the time when, nor the person by whom it was introduced into the Church can be found, we may safely conclude it is no other than the Institution of Christ himself, and not brought in by men for any such End; only some through mistakes did in after ages attribute too much to it with reference to that end. From all, how little hath *our Author* said in pursuance of these two first arguments for the promotion of his Cause

Secondly, Let it be considered, how greatly he hath abused and wronged, as his Authors, so his Readers, himself and his cause, in what he hath said. He hath greatly abused his Authors, either in Fathering that upon them which they never said, or grossely perverting their words, contrary to what they Evidently declared to be their sense and meaning in them. This he tells us (Page 108.) That it was the known Custom of the Primitive Church to Baptize the Adult, and them

them only, at least for the first ages, is fully attested by Eusebius, Beatus Rhenanus, &c. whereas not one of them, except Ludovicus Vives ( of whom I have spoken before ) say any such thing. As for Beatus Rhenanus hee either speaks of Heathens, or else his words declare, he was a man that spake either he knew not, or cared not what. Let their Testimonies be read as quoted by himself, Page 63. 68. 73. 79. and 88. They say indeed that the aged were or ought to be Baptized, ( which no body denies ) but they say not they only were Baptized. So for at least vastly the Major part of those he quotes, Pages 98. 99. and 101. as acknowledging that there is no command, precept, or example in the Scriptures for the Baptizing of Infants; whereas they only acknowledge that there is no express command or precept, that is a command or precept *in totidem verbis*, nor any express mention of any Infants being Baptized. This he wrests, and would have his reader believe, they acknowledged there is noe warrant from Scri-  
to Baptize them. And what greater abuse or wrong can be done to any Authors, than thus grossely to prevent and wrest their words. Can any man think he had any true actual fear of God before his Eyes when he wrote these Pages? And by thus abusing and wronging his Authors, he hath greatly wronged his Reader, himself and his owne cause; so that whereas he boasteth in his 107. and 108. Pages what he had gained by his learned Authorities; the Truth is, he hath only gained such a blot to his one reputation, as ( unless publick repentance be manifested )

will never be wiped off in this world ; however ( supposing him to have the truth of Grace ) he may obtain Pardon hereafter. And how highly injurious hath he been to the cause he pleads : for Will not his Book remain as a publick Evidence of the Forgeries , Falsities , unjust and injurious dealings , the opposers of Infant-baptism are forced ( for want of any Scripture or rational ground ) to make use of , for the upholding and maintaining their Opinion and Practice . And the truth is , had I not some reason to think the Author is real in what he pleads for , I should much suspect him to be

*\* Tuta frequens.  
que via est sub A.  
trici falere nomen.* no Friend \* to the Anabaptists ; be sure he hath given a sore wound to their cause . But .

Secondly , Let us breifly inquire , whether what may be truely said of the silence of the Scriptures and Antiquity about Infant Baptism , doe not make it vastly more probable that they ought , than that they ought not to be Baptized , This I might greatly enlarge upon , but let only these Five things be well weighed .

First , That in case it had been the will of our Lord Christ that the Covenant-interest of the Infant-seed of his people should have been discontinued , and the application of the token of the Covenant unto them on that ground ceased ; it had been , if not absolutely necessary , yet exceeding useful to his Church , that he should have expressly and plainly declared it : How many Considerations offer themselves to Evidence this , let this only be observed ; That no alteration ought to be made in or about

about the Covenant beyond what our Lord Christ himself hath made: Hence had he not declared his will, that Females as well as Males should be Baptized, we had had no ground for their Baptism. So on the other hand, seeing he hath not declared his will that the Covenant-interest of, and the application of the token thereof unto the Infant-seed of his people should cease, we ought not to deny them the one or the other. Suppose the new Testament had been wholly silent about the will of Christ relating to Infants, (which yet it is not) we ought wholly to have guided our Judgments and practice relating unto them, by the first Establishment of the Covenant with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithfull; where we Evidently finde the natural seed, and that as such, both of *Abraham*, and all that were according to the true intendment of the Promise to be accounted for his seed, received into the same Covenant, and had the same token applyed to them with their Parents. And who could without hazard of subjecting themselves to his displeasure, make any alteration or change in the Tenour of the Covenant or any thing relating thereunto, beyond what our Lord Christ himself hath made?

Secondly, Let it be seriously considered, how utterly improbable it is, that an alteration of such a vast importance could have been made, unless the will of our Lord Christ had been expressly declared, without some opposition made by the unbelieving Jews, or some doubts and scruples arising in the minds of Believers, especially the converted Jews, about it. Whoso shall attentively

tively read over the sacred records relating to the New Testament-times, and consider what doubts did arise in the minds of Believers about, yea, what opposition was made by them, as well as by the unbelieving Jews, against changes of a vast lower importance, will hardly think this to carry the least or lowest degree of probability in it. Were they so tenacious of the distinction of Days and Meats, and would they so easily part with the Covenant-interest of their Children? Were they so hardly brought to part with Circumcision it self, though they had Baptism substituted in the room and stead thereof? And yet would they without any difficulty at all comply with, not only the taking away the token from their Children, but their interest in the Covenant and Promises also, without the substitution of any other privilege in leiu thereof: *Credat Appella*; for my own part I cannot do it.

Thirdly, Let it be further considered, that there is no error or erroneous practice introduced into the Church, but it may be traced up to its first rise, at least the time may be shewed from Antiquity, when it was not in being in the Church. This the Lord *Brookes* and others have taken notice of; what a worthy account our Author hath given us of the rise of Infant-baptism hath been already declared; neither is it possible for any to give a better than himself hath done. But

Fourthly, Consider yet further, that the very first mention we have in Antiquity, of any doubts or debates relating to Infant-baptism does plainly imply, and presuppose it to have been antecedently

dently practised. Let *our Author* or any other produce the first mention that is made of any thing of that nature in Antiquity. I doubt not but it will be made evident, that that does presuppose the practice thereof to be in use before that time.

Fifthly, Let it yet be considered, that the first that we find to have spoken or written any thing with a direct reference to the practising of Infant-baptism, was to advise and perswade to the deferring of it. As for *Justin Martyr*, and *Irenaeus*, though they let fall such passages as may be at least a probable ground to believe that it was the practice of the Church in their days, yet they wrote not directly either for, or against it.

And as for *Cyprian*, what he wrote about it to *Fidus*, did only relate to the time of its administration, whether it might be administered before the eighth day or no. So that *Tertullian* seems to be the first that wrote with a direct reference to the practice it self. From whence we may rationally conclude, that before *Tertullian* arose, the Church had continued from the Apostles days in the universal practice of Infant-baptism. That he found it the general practice of the Church is evident from that kind of opposition he makes against it; and nothing appears as the least intimation that it was not universal; for he wrote nothing against the lawfulness of the practice, but only perswades by several considerations, (such as they are) to deferr it.

And here we might again take notice how grossly *our Author* abuseth both *Tertullian*, and the *Magdeburgenses*, as relating *Tertullian's* opinion,

Infant baptism from Heaven,  
nion, he abuseth both in two things.

First, In saying they, that is the *Magdeburgenses*, tell us, that *Tertullian* did oppose himself against some that asserted Infant-baptism, whereas they only say (having given an account of *Cyprian's* resolution of the question sent him from *Fidus*, viz. that Infants might be baptized immediately or presently after they were born, *mox post quam editi*) that *Tertullian* thought otherwise, *Contra quod tamen Turtullianus censuit in libro de baptismo*: So that as he did not, so they do not say that he did, oppose himself against any, only was of a different judgement from *Cyprian* as to to the time of baptizing Infants.

Secondly, *Our Author* grossly abuseth both, by pretending that they tell us that *Tertullian* opposed himself against Infant-baptism absolutely; whereas they only tell us, that *Tertullian* said the differing of Baptism was more profitable according to the Condition, Disposition, and Age of all persons, especially Infants. Their words are *pro cuiusque inquit, viz. Tertullianus, persone, Conditione, Dispositione, etiam Ætate cunctatio baptissimi utilior est, præcipue tamen circa parvulos.* So that *Tertullian* only advileth to delay the baptism of Infants, and that not only theirs, but of all other unmarried persons.

The next that wrote any thing directly with reference to the practising of Infant-baptism, seems to have been *Gregory Nazianzen* (whom *our Author* again together with the *Magdeburgenses* grossly abuseth, (as almost which of his Authorities that he cites in favour of his cause, doth he not) and it may seem he was at least in part of Ter-

Tertullian's mind, yet withal affirms, that *omni etati Baptisma convenire, that Baptism doth agree to every age*: And from the opinion of these two men probably it was that some Children of believing parents had their Baptism deferred, of which *our Author* makes so great use. But that is by the way. Now let all men judge whether what silence may be truly spoken of the Scriptures and Antiquity do not make it somewhat more than probable, that Infant-baptism was the universal practice of the Church in the Apostles days and the ages immediately succeeding: It had been, if not simply and absolutely necessary, yet exceeding useful that our Lord Christ should have plainly declared that his will about the discontinuing the Covenant-interest of the seed of his people, and the cessation of the application of the token of the Covenant to them on that account, had it been indeed his will that the one should have been discontinued, and the other left off; but no such declaration can be found. How unlikely that such a privilege should be withdrawn from the people of God, and no scruple arise in any mens minds about it, nor one Scribe, Pharisee, or unbelieving Jew, so much as taking the least notice of it, or improving it as an argument against the embracement of the doctrine of Christ.

No man can be found as the first inventor of this practice of Infant-baptism; the first mention of it in Antiquity implying, that then it was in use, yea the general practice of the Church. The first that wrote any thing with a direct reference to the practising of it, only useth some frivolous reasons

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Infant-baptism from Heaven,  
reasons to perswade to the delay of it, neither  
opposing that practice as unlawful, nor so much  
as taking the least notice of the novelty of it, or  
of the practice of the Church to be otherwise.  
Now can any rational man imagine in case Infant-  
baptism (as *our Author* pretends) had been hardly  
yet in use, only asserted by some few in order to  
the future practice of it, that *Tertullian*, who it  
seems did somewhat dislike it, would have only  
perswaded to the deferring of it, and that by such  
inconsiderable reasons; and not rather set himself  
directly and downright against the practice it  
self, and that as an innovation unheard of hitherto  
in the Church; he could not be ignorant what  
the practice of the Church had been. : And had  
he known that the universal practice of the  
**Church** had been to baptize the Adult only, he  
would undoubtedly have urged that, if not as  
the only, yet as a main argument against it, or at  
least as a main motive to perswade to the defer-  
ring of it. But when such a man as *Tertullian*  
was, (who so fully vnderstood the affairs of the  
**Church**, not only in his own days, but in the a-  
ges past) shall only advise to the delay of Infant-  
baptism, and that too only as more profitable;  
and not at all either oppofe the practice as un-  
lawful, or so much as take the least notice of the  
practice of the Church in baptizing the Adult on-  
ly, it is to me (what it may be to others I can-  
not say) little less than a full demonstration that  
Infant-baptism was then the known and appro-  
ved practice of the Church, yea and had been so  
from the Apostles time. Surely a man that is  
not a stranger to all principles of Reason had need  
of

of some very cogent arguments to satisfie himself that Infant-baptism was not practised either in the Apostles days, or in the ages immediately ensuing. But to proceed

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## C H A P. IV.

*Wherein his third Particular for the disproving of Infant-Baptism is considered: In what sence Tradition is laid by us as a ground of Infant-Baptism declared: That ground in the sence in which it is laid by us, vindicated from Mr. Danvers his attempts to overthrow it.*

**T**Hirdly, the supposed erroneous grounds both as to fabulous Traditions, and mistaken Scriptures; upon which the practice of Infant-baptism hath been both formerly and laterly founded, is brought by our Author as his third argument or consideration to disprove the practice thereof.

*Answ.* As for the former ground, viz. Tradition, upon which he saith the practice of Infant-Baptism hath been both formerly, and laterly founded, I shall not spend much time in the vindication of it; only I might here again detect his disingenuity and unworthy dealing, yea downright falsities and untruths. Thus he most disingeniously and falsely affirms, that the first and principal ground that hath been laid for this practice, hath been Ecclesiastical and

Apostolical Tradition ; and I doubt not but he thought the very name of a Tradition would considerably advantage his Cause ; those that will but attentively read his own Book , must have a very great Charity for him not to believe that he affirms this contrary to his own knowledge. For

First, himself acknowledgeth, that the 19. Mat: 14. was of old called the Scripture-Canon for Infant-Baptism, Page 177 ; so again Page 260.

Secondly , he knows full well that Circumcision was frequently pleaded for it.

Thirdly , he knows *Austin* denies it to be a Sacrament without the word of Institution, Page 103.

Lastly, he cannot but know how these Fathers understood the word Tradition. See Doctor Ames his first Book , sixth Chapter , Page 67. *de Verbo Dei*, where he sheweth how the Ancients used this term Tradition , quoting that known passage out of Cyprian , *Si aut in Evangelio præcipitur, aut Apostolorum Epistolis, aut actibus, continetur, observatur certè hæc sancta traditio.* But this is *ad hominem, non ad rem.* I shall therefore pass it by, and only shew how far Infant-Baptism is founded upon Tradition , and then take a brief account in one particular instance , how *our Author* hath acquitted himself in razing this Foundation , as he calls it , of Infant-Baptism. For the first , and thus we constantly affirm, that the Scriptures are only and alone in a proper sence the ground and foundation of our Faith and Practice in matters relating to the Worship of God ; the whole

Faith

faith and practice of the Church as such ought to be resolved into , and grounded upon the Scriptures ; \* and consequently the only proper ground upon which this practice in special hath been, and is founded by all Orthodox and sound Divines are the Scriptures: And answerably we take in Tradition (by which we understand no more than the discoveries that have been made in and by the Church, whether doctrinally or practically of the descent of this practice from the times of Christ and his Apostles to our dayes ) as a subordinate means, whereby we come to know, and are more fully confirmed that it was indeed established by Christ and his Apostles, and contained in the Doctrine of the Gospel. Neither do we say that this Tradition is the principal means whereby we come to know this : But the principal means are , the Scriptures themselves , as compared one with another ; this is only a subordinate means ; so that the practice we plead for is founded upon Tradition , but in a very inferiour way, *viz.* as that is a subordinate means whereby we come to know , and be more fully assured that it is according to the will of Christ reveiled in his word. But

Secondly , let us see whether *our Author* hath rendred this ground wholly disserviceable , as to the use we make of it ; whether he hath sufficiently proved that all traditional Testimonies (as he speaks) produced by us for the establishment of the practice under debate, be indeed fabulous and fictitious, as he pretends. And here I shall

\* *Sunt Scripturae  
prima veritas re-  
velata, sicut De-  
us est prima ve-  
ritas revelans.*

only single out the testimony that the Epistle of *Cyprian* to *Fidus* gives, as to the practice of Infant-Baptism in his days, and see whether it may not be as much regarded and leaned to after he hath said the utmost he can, as it might before; yea whether it might not before, and consequently still be greatly regarded, and safely leaned upon, so far as humane Authority may be leaned upon. And as previous hereunto, it must be observed how subtilly *our Author* endeavours to conceale the main, yea in effect the whole of the Evidence given in by that Epistle for our assurance, that Infant-Baptism was then the universal practice of the Church. This appears thus:

Whereas one *Fidus* a Minister having written to *Cyprian* to give him his judgment, whether the eighth day was not alike to be observed by Christians as the time for the Application of Baptism to Infants, as it was of old for the Application of Circumcision? *Cyprian* assembleth 66 Bishops to debate that Question: They all unanimously agree, that no such observation ought to be made, but that Infants might lawfully be baptized, *mox postquam editi, immediately after they were born*: Hereupon *Cyprian* writes back to *Fidus*, giving him an account of his own and their Judgments in that particular. Now from hence we infer three things.

First, that Infant-Baptism was then generally practised.

Secondly, that it had been so time out of mind.

Thirdly, that in as much as they lived so near  
the

the Apostles days, it must most probably be the practice of their times. And that which we ground these inferences upon is this, *viz.* That neither *Fidus*, nor *Cyprian*, and those 66 Bishops with him, did at all question the lawfulness of Infant-Baptism; the former only questioning, the latter only determining about the precise time of its application.

Now it seems altogether irrational to imagine, that so many on the one hand, and on the other should not rather question the practice it self, than the time of its administration, in case it had not been the general practice of those, yea of the Apostles times; seeing they cannot be rationally supposed, unacquainted with what was the practice of the Church even in their days. *Cyprian*, and consequently those other Bishops contemporary with him, flourished about the year 240, or 250. and consequently about eighty years after the death of *Policarp*, who was one of the Apostle *John's* Hearers and Disciples, for he was martyred in the fourth Persecution under *Decius* the Emperor, which was in the year 168.

Now can it be imagined that so many Bishops could possibly be ignorant of what was the practice of the Church in the Apostles days, so nigh unto which they lived; or can it be imagined, that had they known Infants were not baptized in their days; there should only arise a doubt among them about the time of its application, and none about the practice it self. But these things our Author thought meet to conceal, and carry on his Discourse, as though the scruple

had been about the practice it self. And from what hath been said it evidently appears, that the only question relating to this Epistle of *Cyprian* is this, *viz.* Whether this Epistle were indeed written by *Cyprian* or no? whether *Fidus* did write to him for satisfaction in that case? And whether he wrote back to him that Epistle wherein he declares his own; and those Sixty six Bishops judgements about the question proposed to *Fidus*? And hence *our Authors* first consideration to enervate this testimony of *Cyprian* signifies nothing at all; inasmuch as *Cyprian* medleth not at all with the practice it self, but takes the lawfulness of that for granted, as having been the universal practice of the Church in and since the Apostles days, and only determines the time when Baptism may be applyed to Infants.

As for his second Consideration, which alone is of any weight, *viz.* that there is good ground as he saith to question whether this was *Cyprian's* and these Sixty six Bishops conclusion, we shall easily discover the vanity of it. Let us therefore see the grounds he hath to question that.

First, His first Ground is, because we meet with no such Council, nor doth it appear where it was held.

To whlch I would say three things.

First, that the Ancients did generally, yea universally for ought it appears to the contrary, own and acknowledge this to be *Cyprians* Epistle, and consequently that there was such a Council held,

held , though the place where is not exprest. This appears by their frequent citing of it , and for us who live so many hundred years after them, to call it into question upon this ground, when they did not, is irrational.

Secondly, That there was such a Council or Synod ( for it is exprest sometimes by the one term, sometimes by the other) and that it was held in *Africa*, (though the particular town or place where be not exprest,) is expressly declared by the *Magdeburgenses*, Century the third, Chap. 9. pag. 205.

Thirdly , Some affirm it was held at *Carthage*.

His second Ground is , because the grounds upon which the Conclusion is grounded are so weak.

*Answ.* All the Grounds are not so weak and frivolous as our Author pretends; but how weak soever , yet not more weak than *Tertullian's*, by which he perswades to the deferring of Baptism, and yet these are lookt upon by our Author as considerable ; and whoso is acquainted with the Fathers, will find somewhat of weakness in the reasonings of the most noted among them,

Thirdly , His third Ground is , because it is a doctrine so much contradicted by his great Master *Tertullian*, whom he so much reverenced.

*Answ.* *Tertullian* doth not absolutely oppose

Infant-baptism, only adviseth to deferr it as more profitable: Hence this doctrine doth not absolutely contradict *Tertullian*; but suppose it did, 'tis no wonder though *Cyprian* contradict *Tertullian* in that wherein he dissented from the judgement and practice of the universal Church.

Fourthly, His last Ground is this, because other things have been Father'd upon him which were none of his. This is so far from being a ground to question whether this Epistle was *Cyprian's* or no, that it doth strongly argue it was his: Inasmuch as in case it had not been his, it would have been somewhere discovered as those other things Father'd upon him are. From all which we see how little ground *our Author* hath, or any others have to question the truth and genuiness of this Epistle; and supposing the truth and genuiness of it; it is past all rational doubt that Infant-baptism was the known and approved practice of the primitive times. And I am bold to say, and doubt not but to make it good, if needful; that this one Epistle of *Cyprian*, gives greater evidence that Infant-baptism was practised in the primitive times, than all the Authorities *our Author* hath produced give against it. So that this first Ground (as he calls it) of Infant-baptism lies firm, and is as serviceable to the use we put it to, as ever it was, notwithstanding he hath wearied, yea I may say wounded and bruised himself so much in his attempts to raze or remove it. But

## C H A P. V.

*A Vindication of the Scripture-grounds  
of Infant-baptism entred upon. Two  
Things remarked with reference to the  
Opposition made against the Argument  
drawn from their Federal Holiness : The  
Arguments drawn from the Covenant  
considered. Three of the principal with  
reference to that Covenant proposed. The  
unsoundness of Mr. Danvers Resolu-  
tions of them evidenced : The true Reso-  
lutions of them given.*

Secondly, to proceed to the other ground, viz. Scripture Authority, upon which Infant-baptism is founded, and this is that we are principally concern'd in. Suppose he hath (which yet he is far short of) rendred the ground of Tradition utterly unserviceable, and of no use to us; yet if the ground of Scripture Authority lie firm, the practice we have founded thereupon stands sure. But here again I shall not spend time in the vindication of all those Scriptures that *our Author* hath thought meet to bestow his pains in rendring useless unto us. He hath it seems judged it highly conduced to the furtherance of his cause to attack where he foresaw his conquest sure; though he could not but know

that (excepting in the judgment of such who conceit the cause is gained when a Scripture is baffled, that however made use of by some, yet really is impertinent to the question in controversie) neither our cause is prejudiced, nor his promoted thereby. I shall only remark one or two things with reference to the opposition he makes against that argument Pedobaptists make use of, drawn from the federal holiness of the seed of believing Parents, grounded upon *1 Cor. 7. 14.* for the establishing the practice of Infant-baptism, and come to what I principally intend.

First, It may be observed, of how little advantage to *our Authors* cause, that weighty observation is (for so I suppose he conceives it to be) that he hath made, or rather taken up from Mr. *Tombes*, concerning the antiquity of this argument. His words are these, speaking of this argument, *of which Zuinglius about one hundred and twenty Years since, for as much as I can learn, was the first founder, wherein he was singular from all that went before him.* With reference unto which let these few things be observed.

I. That it may be shrewdly suspected that he grossly belies his own knowledge, denies himself to be able to *learn* what he cannot, (supposing him as well read in Authors as he pretends) but know. For

I. Mr. *Marshal* (whom doubtless he hath read) in his answer to Mr. *Tombes*, shews him that the Ancients were not wholly strangers to the federal holyness of the Infant-seed of Believers, and instanceth in *Athanasius* and *Tertullian*, the one a Greek, and the other a Latine Author; and

*Gerard,*

Gerard Tom. 4. Pag. 593. instanceth in two more, viz. *Austin* and *Jerome*, interpreting this very text to the same sence, though it shall be granted that *Austin* in one of his Epistles was of another mind. But

2. Our Author himself elsewhere grants, (as is before observed) that that Text in *Mattb.* 19. ver. 14. was so commonly urged for Infant-baptism, that it bore the title of the Scripture-canonical for that practice ; and he cannot but know that Circumcision was frequently urged for the establishment of the same practice. And can our *Author* or any one else imagine that learned men, having so great acquaintance with the Scriptures as they had, should affirm Infants to belong to the kingdom of heaven, and yet know nothing of their Interest in the Covenant of Grace, by virtue of which they can only belong thereunto. Or can any think that they understood not, that Circumcision was a token of the Covenant, and answerably was applied to Infants as such ? It is plain they did : *Austin* in his Fourth Book concerning Baptism, *Chap.* 24. determines that the Sacrament of Circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of Faith to *Isaac*, even in his infancy when he was but eight days old. So *Cbrysostom* and *Theophilact* cited by our *Author* himself, affirmed it with the Apostle, to be a seal of the righteousness of Faith ; which righteousness is undoubtedly one of the blessings promised in the Covenant of Grace. And hence it cannot be rationally supposed, but that they must apply Baptism to Infants under the same notion under which Circumcision was applied to them of old.

Would

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Infant-baptism from Heaven,  
Would they plead for Baptism from Circumcis-  
on, unless they took it for granted that Infants  
still had the same ground for Baptism, *viz.* in-  
terest in the Covenant, that the Infant-seed of  
the Jews had for Circumcision. Now the fede-  
ral holiness of Infants that we plead for, and  
make one ground of their Baptism is the same  
thing express'd in other words with their Cove-  
nant interest, or state, at least is the immediate  
result of it. But

2. Can it be any advantage to his, or preju-  
dice to our cause that some arguments have been  
found out of late, beyond what have been for-  
merly made use of. I suppose *our Author* will  
not think the cause he pleads for is prejudiced by  
any thing he hath brought to light, *de novo*.

3. That it is the strength of Arguments, not  
the Antiquity or Authors of them; that the cause  
is concern'd in: Hence if this be a valid Argu-  
ment, it matters not who was the first Author  
of it. But

2. I must remark his confident assertion, *pag.*  
**198.** where saith he, speaking still of this Argu-  
ment, *we have two things asserted, but not at all*  
*proved:* What those things are he tells us.

First, That the holiness in the text is meant  
of federal holiness.

Secondly, That federal holiness qualifies for  
Baptism.

Neither of these, saith he, *is at all proved*.  
Had he said not sufficiently or satisfactorily pro-  
ved, it had argued some modesty; but, not at all  
proved, is too high for one no better skill'd in Ar-  
gumentation, than for what appears in his Book  
he is.

Whether

Whether what our *Author* hath said, be of more force to disprove, than what others, especially Mr. *Baxter* hath said to prove, that this same federal holiness is intended in the text, I shall refer to the judgement of all unbyassed and unprejudiced men; and come to what I more especially aim at, and that is to vindicate those Arguments drawn from the Covenant as established with *Abraham* and his seed in their Generations, for the confirmation of the practice we plead for, from the attempts our *Author* hath made to invalidate them.

And that the Reader may more clearly see how we infer and conclude Infant-baptism from the Covenant as so established, he must carefully observe and remember four things.

First, That we distinguish between the Covenant-interest, or (as it is usually call'd) federal holyness of the Infant-seed of Believers, and their right to Baptism.

Secondly, That it is their Covenant-interest that we principally contend for, and design the proof of, from the Covenant at first established with *Abraham* the Father of the faithful.

Thirdly, That we plead not for Infant-baptism merely from the Analogy it bears with or to Circumcision, as though the Analogy between them were a sufficient ground of the application of Baptism to Infants, as our *Author* would bear men in hand that we do.

Fourthly, Though we judge it a very rational supposal, that the application of the token of the Covenant should be as extensive under the New Testament, as it was under the old: Yet do we

not

not ground our practice merely upon that supposal, but upon the command obliging *Abraham's* seed in their Generations to keep the Covenant, that is the token of the Covenant. And hence we say that Infant-baptism may be sufficiently proved from the Covenant so far as we design the proof of it therefrom, as made with *Abraham* and his seed in their Generations; though little consideration be had of Circumcision. Whence it is but a subtil insinuation to prejudicate the minds of unwary Readers to talk of our Arguments from Circumcision; it is not from Circumcision, but from the Covenant that we plead for Infant-baptism. Hence the Resolution of these four questions is necessary and sufficient for the discovering whether Infant-baptism may, or may not be truly inferred and concluded from the Covenant as now establish'd with *Abraham*.

First, Whether the New or Gospel Covenant, and this mentioned Gen. 17. be one and the same? Or more plainly, whether the New Covenant, the Covenant under the New Testament administration, under which Believers are; be not the same with that mentioned Gen. 17.7?

Secondly, Whether the Infants of *Abraham* and his seed, and that as such were not included and comprehended in this Covenant, and that both in the promissory and preceptive part of it?

Thirdly, Whether Circumcision was the token, sign, or seal of the Covenant both to Parents and Children?

Fourthly, Whether Baptism be not the token, sign, or seal of the Covenant under the Gospel administration?

The satisfactory resolution of these questions would be sufficient for the discovery of the mind and will of God relating unto Baptism, so far as it is held forth unto us in the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham* and his seed in their Generations. For if so be it be indeed certain, that the Covenant believers are now under, be the same with that establish'd with *Abraham*, and the Infants both of *Abraham* and his seed, and that as such; were included and comprehended in the Covenant, both in the promissory and preceptive part of it: and consequently as the promise so the command concerning the application and bearing of the token of the Covenant did tend to and concern them: And that Circumcision was the sign, token, or seal of the Covenant both to Parents and Children, and Baptism doth now succeed in the place, room, and use of Circumcision in that general notion and consideration, as a sign or token of the Covenant; then past all rational doubt, according to the true intentment of God in this Covenant, Infants ought to be baptized, as of old they were circumcised. But if these or any of these things be not so, but are mere mistakes on our part, I shall confess, we have no sure footing for the practice of Infant-baptism in the Covenant, as at first establish'd with *Abraham* and his seed in their Generations. But seeing our Author hath judged it more conducing to his cause to tread in a different path, I must follow him in that, and see what he hath gained by his so doing; with this proviso, that I shall more lightly touch upon these questions wherein the practice in controversie is less; and more enlarge

Infant baptism from Heaven,  
large upon those wherein it is more neerly con-  
cerned. His

First Particular or Enquiry is, whether Cir-  
cumcision call'd the Gospel Seal, did of old belong  
to all in Gospel Covenant. This he resolves in the  
Negative, and gives us two reasons of that his  
resolution.

First, Because some that were in the Gospel Co-  
venant were not sealed.

Secondly, Because some that were out of the Co-  
venant were sealed therewith.

*Answ.* This question but little (if at all) con-  
cerns the main question in controversie; so that  
should his resolution prove right, we are not  
hurt thereby: And the reason is evident, *viz.*  
because we ground Infant-baptism upon their  
Covenant-interest, arising from their relation to  
such Parents who are to be accounted *Abraham's*  
seed, considered in conjunction with the com-  
mand obliging all his seed in their Generations,  
(*i.e.*) both they and their Children to keep the  
Covenant, (*i.e.*) the token of the Covenant.  
Hence unless our Author prove, (which he attempts  
not) that Circumcision did not belong to all *A-  
braham's* seed in their Generations, including, as  
before, Parents and their Infants, and consequent-  
ly that there were some Infants, who though the  
Children of such Parents as were to be accounted  
*Abraham's* seed, yet neither had any interest in  
the Covenant, nor were to be circumcised.

His instances of persons in Covenant who were  
not circumcised, and of persons out of Covenant  
who were circumcised, (supposing it were so as  
he saith) signifie nothing to his purpose. Let  
God

God dispose of his own institutions as himself pleaseth. Let us mind our own duties: Now this is evident, that as *Abraham's* seed in their generations are under the promise that God will be a God unto them; so they are under the command that they in their generations do keep the Covenant (*i e*) the token of the Covenant. Let *our Author* either prove that Infants were not included with their Parents either in the promises, or in the command concerning the application of the token of the Covenant, or else that Circumcision ought not to be applyed to all included in the Covenant, otherwise he saith nothing to purpose. Therefore

\* Secondly, Whether the New or Gospel Covenant and that mention'd Gen. 17. be one and the same?

*Answ.* In resolving this question *our Author* speaks warily and indeed gives no resolution at all, but leaves his Reader in the dark. I suppose he knew that to have absolutely denied, that the Covenant here mention'd is one and the same with the New Covenant under which Believers now are, had involved him in inextricable difficulties; and yet to have affirmed that they are one and the same, had given a shrewd blow to his cause. Hence he judgeth it meet, only to cast a mist before his Readers eyes by needless and impertinent distinctions about a double capacity that *Abraham* stood in, and two different sorts of promises made to him. But how those distinctions conduce any thing to satisfie the Reader about the question put, he declares not. So that the Reader must needs remain at the same uncertainty

80 Infant baptism from Heaven,  
tainty, whether that Covenant, and the New  
Covenant be one and the same, or whether they  
are two distinct Covenants, that he was at before.  
It is true he instanceth in several promises, and  
among the rest, one in the fifth Verse of this  
Chapter, which is made personally to *Abraham*,  
and wherein none of his Seed have any part  
with him; and pretends to mention another,  
that he saith, *in an especial manner belongs* (a dark  
and doubtful expression) *to the New Covenant.*  
I say pretends, because it is uncertain, whether  
there be not a mistake in the Printer, putting  
the eighth Verse for the seventh; though I very  
much suspect there is not, and if not so, he  
wholly passeth by the Covenant, or that pro-  
mise in the seventh Verse, about which the main  
and proper question between our opposers and  
us is mainly (if not only) concerned. Seeing  
there is no such promise as he mentions in that  
Verse he points to, it can be but a pretence meer-  
ly to blind the eyes of his Reader, and lead him  
blindfold through this Question; the right de-  
termination of which is of such vast impor-  
tance for the clearing up the main Question in  
controversie between us.

To the next question, which he judged  
he could give a more plausible answer to,  
without exposing himself to any such incon-  
veniences as a plain down-right Answer to  
this would have done; and if there be a mistake,  
the eighth Verse being put for the seventh; then  
we have the full of what we desire: But seeing  
*our Author* hath thought it convenient thus to  
divert from the question, himself proposed, I  
would

would desire him, (if ever he write again) plainly and distinctly to resolve these two or three questions, absolutely necessary for the unfolding this dark and confused Discourse, that he pretends as a full resolution of this question.

First, whether this Covenant mentioned in the seventeenth of *Genesis*, were made with *Abraham* as a Natural, or as a Spiritual Father, or considered in both these capacities? We say as considered in both; upon what ground he may see in my Infant-Baptism from Heaven, *Page* the seventh and eighth.

Secondly, to what Covenant these promises that he mentions as made to *Abraham* as a Natural Father, with respect to his Natural Seed, did belong? Did they belong to the Covenant of Works, or (as some call it) the Covenant of Nature? or was there any other Covenant afore made with *Abraham*, unto which they did belong? or did they belong to no Covenant at all? We say they belonged to the Covenant of Grace, or New Covenant, though some of them at least were indefinite promises made to his Seed in general; not definite, made to any individuals of his Seed; or (as others express it) they were promises, not of the essence of, only appendices to the Covenant. And the reason is, because we judge them to be Covenant-Mercies; and can find no other Covenant they can with any shew of reason be supposed to appertain unto. If our Author will help us out here, he shall have hearty thanks for his pains.

Thirdly, whether it was a mistake of the Printer, in putting down the eighth Verse for

the seventh, or no? If it was not, (as I suppose he will be unwilling (for reasons he knows) to grant, that this promise in the seventh Verse doth belong to the New Covenant, or Covenant of Grace, under which Believers are, under the New Testament) I would ask him, or any other man that is *Compos mentis*, whether the promise of the Land of *Canaan* in the former part of the eighth Verse, and the promise of God's being their God in the latter part of the same Verse, were not made to the same persons? Let the words be but read. *And I will give unto thee, and unto thy Seed after thee the Land wherein thou art a Stranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.* Now ask but any Child that hath learned his Accidence; what is the Antecedent to, *their*? Surely he will presently reply, *thy Seed*, mentioned in the former part of the Verse, unto whom the promise of the Land of *Canaan* is made.

Now then these two promises as thus connected and made joynly to the same persons, they must needs belong to one and the same Covenant; which being granted, as infallibly it will by all that have any regard to what they say; I would ask any man, whether they do think they belong to the Covenant mentioned Verse the seventh or no? Did I think it were necessary, I should add something to prove that they do.

Now then let things be laid together, and seriously weighed: That the promise of God's being a God to *Abraham's Seed* mentioned in the eighth

Verse

Verse belongs to the Covenant of Grace, is positively asserted by *our Author*. That the promise of the Land of *Canaan*, and this promise were made to the same Seed is undeniable, and that both these promises belong to one and the same Covenant is as undeniable as the former. And yet further, that the Covenant they belong to is that mentioned Verse the seventh, is as much above any rational question as either. Now he acknowledgeth, that the promise of the Land of *Canaan* was made to *Abraham* with respect to his Natural Seed; and from all it will appear, even from what *our Author* himself acknowledgeth, as though written with the Beams of the Sun, that the Covenant mentioned *Genesis* the seventeenth, and the seventh, is the Covenant of Grace, or the New Covenant; the same with that Believers are now under, and that this Covenant was made with *Abraham* as a Natural, as well as a Spiritual Father, with respect to his Natural as well as his Spiritual Seed; and so we have both this and the next question answered together. And yet further, that the Covenant mentioned Verse the seventh, established with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations, is not only a Covenant of Grace; but the Covenant of Grace, under which Believers in New Testament times are, is sufficiently made out elsewhere; and indeed is so evident from that Discourse of the Apostle in the third to the *Galatians*, that it is to admiration how any man can pretend to own the Writings of the Apostles, and yet question it. That he hath refe-

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rence, Verse the sixteenth, to this Covenant is past all doubt, in as much as there is no other promise exprest in these terms, *to thy Seed*, (wherein the very strength of the Apostles Argument lies) but only this: And that the Covenant in which that promise is contained was never disannulled; but is that Covenant according to which Believers enjoy all the blessings of the Gospel, is as evident as any thing in the World can be made by words, as is sufficiently shewed in the forementioned Discourse. So that I need add no more; only I shall say that the promise, *Genesis* the seventeenth, seventh Verse, doth not only belong to the Covenant of Grace under which Believers still are, but is the very sum and substance of it, as to God's part; and our opposers shutting their eyes against the Scripture-Light evidencing the Truth hereof, is one special cause of their falling into, and continuing in that Errour they so pertinaciously maintain.

But to proceed; *What Seed of Abraham* Quest. 3. *it is to whom that promise* (*Genesis* seventeenth, seventh Verse) *doth belong, whether his Natural, or his Spiritual Seed?* Our Author adds another Question, viz. *Who those Children of promise mentioned in the second of Acts the thirty ninth Verse are?* which at present I shall not concern my self about. Let one Question be answered first: And though our Author do not expressly declare his Sentiments at first, yet after he doth, and is very peremptory and positive (upon what grounds will presently appear) that that promise did not at all, or in any sence belong to *Abraham's* Natural, but wholly and alone

alone to his spiritual seed. And he conceives the Scriptures themselves give us such a full and plain exposition of this promise, as might seem to be enough to determine the question, without any more ado: What is the good contained in this promise, I shall (if the Lord will) open hereafter, that which we are at present to enquire into is, whether this promise did not belong to *Abraham's* natural seed, and that merely as such; as well as to his spiritual seed? And thus in a direct opposition to what *our Author* hath affirmed, I shall say, That this promise did belong not only to *Abraham's* spiritual but also to his natural seed, and that *eo nomine* as his natural seed: That it did not belong to all his natural seed in the same sence; or after the same manner I freely grant: For take the promise as a definite promise, conveying and making over an actual right and title to the good contained and intended in it to each individual and particular subject of it, so it did belong only to *Abraham's* natural seed immediately proceeding from his own loyns, (as *Ishmael, Isaac &c.*) and it did belong universally to them, or to them one as well as another. But take it as an indefinite promise, signifying to and assuring *Abraham* and his seed of the will and purpose of God to bestow the good, contained and intended in it, upon them in a more special and peculiar manner, so it did belong to his natural seed proceeding mediately from him in all succeeding ages; and consequently in this sence it doth belong to the Jews as the seed of *Abraham* above what it doth to the race or posterity of any men whatsoever to this very day; in

which regard they are Rom. 11. 16. said to be holy. We are only at present concern'd in the former way and manner of its belonging to the natural seed of Abraham; and that this promise as thus considered, did belong to all Abrahams natural seed immediately proceeding from his own loyns hath been (I conceive) so evidently and unanswerably proved elsewhere, that unless

Infant-baptism pag. 19. those arguments could be answer'd it may seem wholly superfluous to add any thing more: And indeed the

case lies so evident and plain, that it admits of no contradiction, unless men are resolved to force their way over the belly (to use that Scotch phrase) of the plainest Scriptures: Saith God, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed in their generations.* Now how was it possible but that *Abraham* must understand this firstly and immediately of his natural Children. It is true, God had told him that he should be *a father of many Nations*, and he might well think that those nations, he should be a Father to, might be included in the term *seed*; but to understand it of those, excluding his natural Children would have been absurd and irrational: And besides God tells him that to this seed he promiseth to be a God, unto them he would give the land of Canaan in which he was now a stranger. Now is it possible that he should imagine that his natural seed were excluded? And yet further that which yet makes it most plain, is the express command of God to apply the token of this very Covenant, and that under that very notion and consideration, as the token of it, to all his natural seed immediately proceeding from his

own

own loyns. These things lie so evident, that all attempts against them prove not only vain, but greatly reflect upon their Authors.

Let us then see the Scriptures *our Author* produceth expounding (as he saith) this promise, and (as he conceits) so fully confirming the seed here mention'd, to whom the promise belong'd, not to be *Abraham's* carnal (he should have said natural) but his spiritual seed. And thus he gives us three texts of Scripture; but of how little use as to his purpose will immediately appear. His first Scripture is, *Gal. 3. 16.* where saith the Apostle, *now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made; he saith, not to seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ.* So that the promises were made to Christ, and *our Author* thinks it will infallibly follow, that they were not made to his natural seed. But how he inferrs this he tells us not: That by Christ here we are to understand Christ mystical, that is the Church, including Christ himself as the head: I suppose he hath more understanding than to deny. Now we affirm, that *Abraham's* natural seed, as such, did, as being under the promise, belong to the visible body or Church of Christ, as then gather'd in or constituted of his Family. So that the children of Believers and that as such during their Infant state; belong to the same mystical body of Christ, as upheld and continued yet in the world: Yea we lay this their relation to the Church as one ground of our application of Baptism to them. Now what a vain and frivolous thing is it to imagine, that the Apostles affirming that the promise is only made to Christ

Should expound it as excluding Infants from any interest in it, when we do constantly affirm Infants to appertain unto Christ, to whom the promise is made. But I am much perswaded, that our Author never intended his book for the satisfaction or conviction of any that either had any considerable stock of reason, or would make use of what they had, but he wrote it for the use of another sort of people. To as little purpose is his citation of the 29 vers. of the same Chapter, *If you be Christs, then are you Abrahams seed; Εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς χριστοί εἰστε, τότε εἰστε αβραάμος γένος.* If ye be of Christ or appertain unto Christ as members of his mystical Body, then are ye *Abrahams* seed. And we say (and our Author hath not proved the contrary) that the Infant-seed of Believers are of, and do appertain to Christ.

As for his second Scripture, viz. Rom. 9. 7. 8. that is so far from expounding the promise in favour of his sense, that it doth necessarily imply <sup>Infant-baptism</sup> Chap. 7. Pag. 128. the direct contrary, as hath been made to appear elsewhere: The Apostle doth plainly imply, that there were some who were *Abrahams* seed, and as such were the subjects of the promise who were not the Children of God in the sense there intended by the Apostle; such was *Ishmael* as he shews in the following words: But see this text fully opened and vindicated in the forementioned treatise.

For his third Scripture, namely Rom. 4. 13. 14. how that should expound the promise in favour of our Authors sense is hard to imagine, but to some the bare mention of a Scripture is full proof,

proof, how little soever it make to the purpose. How far and in what sence the Infant-seed of Believers as received into the same Covenant with their Parents; are interested in or made partakers of the righteousness of faith may be enquired into hereafter: let it at present be only observed that both *Isaac* and *Jacob* were joyn-t-heirs with *Abraham* of the same promise during *Abrahams* life time. Hence it is said, *Heb. 11. 9.* *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange Country dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same promise.* Now *Jacob* at *Abrahams* death was but fifteen years old, and the Apostle speaks of his living with them for some time before his death in Tabernacles, as being then coheirs with him of the same promise. Now saith the Apostle in this text, both *Abraham* and his seed, among which seed we must necessarily include *Isaac* and *Jacob*, both he and they were heirs through the righteousness of faith. Whence it is plain that *Jacob* (and the same is true of *Isaac*) in his Infant state was an heir of the World, (as the Apostle here speaks) through the righteousness of faith, when he had not a personal faith himself; but as the Child of a Covenant-Parent. Whence it appears, that the Infant-seed of Believers may be heirs of the promises through the righteousness of faith, though themselves not personally believing.

Now then let all men judge, whether these Scriptures do so fully confirm as our Author pretends, yea or do give any rational or probable intimation, that not *Abrahams* natural, but only his spiritual seed were intended in that promise:

As for the *dismal consequences* (as he calls them) supposed to arise from what we affirm, they are mere Chimeraes feigned by our *Author*, through his darkness, partly about the true and proper good contained in, and conveyed by the Covenant as extended to the Infant-seed of believers, and partly about the true tenour of the Covenant as made with *Abraham* and his seed in their generations: Of the former I shall (if the Lord will) speak more fully hereafter: Of the latter I

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64.

have spoken sufficiently elsewhere, and shall touch again when I come to speak to his fist enquiry. Now then

these two last enquiries being rightly determined, a good foundation is in a considerable measure laid for the practice of Infant-baptism. For if the Covenant establish'd with *Abraham* be the very same with that Believers are still under; and *Abrahams* natural seed as immediately proceeding from his own loyns were taken in as joyns subjects with him of the same Covenant and promises, both which things are evidently true: It is very rational to suppose that all his seed (among whom Believers are undoubtedly to be reckon'd) should (as it is certain they do) partake in the same priviledge: And the Infants of Believers being joyns-subjects with their Parents of the Covenant, it is very rational to conclude that they should have the present token applyed to them; as the Infant-seed of Covenant Parents had the former token of the Covenant applyed unto them, of which more anon. And I cannot (before I proceed any farther) but remark the care of God over, and his goodness

to

to his Church, that he should so fully acquaint us with, as the nature, so the true tenour of the Covenant, at the first establishment of it with the Father of the faithful; that so if any doubt should after arise, they might have recourse to the first establishment, and from thence receive satisfaction. And no wonder though his will relating to the Infant-seed of his people should be more sparingly spoken to afterwards, when it is so fully and plainly reveiled at the first entrance into Covenant with *Abraham*, and the faithful as his seed.

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## C H A P. VI.

*Mr. Danvers his Four last Grounds respecting the Covenant considered: The unsoundness of his Resolutions of them shewed: The true Resolutions of them given and proved: The Argument drawn from the Covenant how strengthened thereby, shewed.*

**T**He next thing enquired into is, *Whether Circumcision was a seal of the New Covenant to Believers and their seed?*

*Answ.* The Terms and Phrases our Author hath seen meet to use, his varying of them, together with his uncouth and unscriptural expressions and impertinencies plainly shew for whose sake he wrote. But such things signify nothing to those

those who as Elihu speaks, have ears to try words as well as mouths to tast meat. That which he is to enquire after, (if his enquiry be any thing to purpose) is, Whether Circumcision were a seal of the Covenant of Grace as entred with Abraham and his seed in their Generations, to the people of God and their Children or Infant-seed. This he seems to be very far from yielding, for he first denies it to be so much as a seal to them, and Secondly, which must needs follow, he much more denies it to be a seal of the New Covenant, that is the Covenant of Grace, and gives some kind of reasons, such as they are, for those his denyals.

Infant-baptism from Heaven pag. 231 to 237.

But having elsewhere proved by several (pardon me though I say) I hope irrefragable Arguments, that Circumcision was a seal to all those who were the due subjects of it (and when I prove it to be a seal, I mean it was so of the Covenant of Grace) I shall not need to say much more, freely appealing to all men of a competent understanding, and not greatly forestalled in their judgments? Whether our Authors Reasons do out-weigh those Arguments? I shall therefore briefly consider his Reasons and quickly dismiss the question.

That Circumcision was a seal to *Abraham*, our Author cannot deny, but he conceives it was a seal only to him, and to no body else. The proof of this his conceit he seems to essay two ways, First by Reason, Secondly by humane Authority, his reasons seem to be these two.

First, *The thing that it was a seal, confirmation and ratification of to Abraham was incompatible to Infants;*

Infants; for so he expresseth himself, its true, it was a seal, confirmation and ratification of the faith that Abraham had long before he was Circumcised, but so could it not be said of any Infant that had no faith.

Ausw. It is a gross mistake to say that Circumcision was a seal, confirmation or ratification of *Abrahams* faith; the scripture saith no such thing, neither do the Authors he cites say any such thing: They say according to Scripture, it was called a seal of the righteousness of Faith, because it was given to Abraham as a seal and Testimony of that righteousness he had acquired by faith: They do not say as our Author, that it was a seal, confirmation or ratification of the Faith which *Abraham* had before he was circumcised, but of the righteousness of faith. Now that Infants are capable of the righteousness of faith, though they cannot act faith themselves; is evident from that instance of *Jacob* before mentioned, and I suppose our Author himself will not upon second thoughts deny it: For I would ask him whether he thinks any Infants are either any way concerned in *Adams* sin, or have any pollution or corruption of nature inherent in themselves? In a word, whether there be any such thing as Original sin, either *Originans* or *Originatum*? if there be, how come any Infants that dye in their Infancy freed from it, do they carry the guilt under which they came into the world into Heaven, or are they universally thrown into Hell? Certainly if any of them be saved, it must be through the righteousness of faith, that is, Gods non-imputation of the guilt to them; and his acceptation of them there-

thereupon as righteous through Christ. Now if they are capable of the righteousness of faith, let him shew any Scripture or Reason, why they might not have that righteousness sealed and confirmed to them by an outward and visible sign. So this first Reason is a mere trifle, signifies nothing at all, let us see his other therefore.

Secondly, He argues from the singularity or speciality of the promises made to *Abraham*, and thus he instances in four promises. First, *that he should be the Father of many Nations*. Secondly, *The father of the Faithful*. Thirdly, *The heir of the world*. Fourthly, *That in him all the Families of the earth should be blessed*: Now he acknowledgeth that Circumcision was a seal or confirmation ( witness he calls it, but that's the thing I judge he intends ) of these promises to *Abraham*, but because none of his seed had any of these promises appertaining to them, therefore he conceives it could not be a seal unto them.

*Answ.* Let it be observed, that our Author had in his answer to his second question, instanced in (at least) some of these promises, as the promises that were made to *Abraham* as a spiritual Father, and of which he saith, *they in a special manner belong to the Covenant of Grace*; and here he saith that Circumcision was a witness to, or did seal and confirm these promises to *Abraham*; so that according to our Authors own acknowledgment, this carnal Ordinance of Circumcision, as our opposers usually call it, might be, yea was a seal of the most spiritual part or promises of the New Covenant to *Abraham*: Yet (such is the power of prejudice) he will not allow it to be a seal, so much

much as of the most carnal, or temporal promise to any of his seed. But sure he will not meet with many (unless alike prejudiced with himself) but will be easily perswaded, that seeing Circumcision was a seal to *Abraham*, of the most spiritual part of the Covenant, it might (if it pleased God so to ordain it) be not only a seal of the temporal, but also of the spiritual part of the Covenant to any or to all of *Abrahams* seed; whether grown persons or Infants, as well as it was to himself: And the truth is, Circumcision was the token, sign or seal of the whole Covenant, though it did seal and confirm the particular promises contained in it, to particular persons according as they were respectively interessed in them. Hence it is called *the token of the Covenant*, without any limitation of its use to any particular promises, *it shall be* (says God speaking of Circumcision) *a token of the Covenant between me and you, Gen. 17. 11.* But I shall leave this to the Judgment of all men, yea of our opposers themselves, whether *our Author* hath said any thing to render it so much as probable, that Circumcision was not a seal to any, unless to *Abraham* himself. But however, be this first thing true or no, yet he seems to be past all doubt, that Circumcision could not be a seal of the New Covenant to Believers, and their seed; therefore says he, *much less was it a seal of the New Covenant*: This he endeavours to prove by this reason, (*viz.*) *because nothing is the seal of the New Testament, but only the spirit,* for which *Ephes. 1. 13. and 4. 30.* are cited.

*Ansiv.* As it is somewhat difficult to guess at what he would say, so unless he purposely designed

ed to beguil his Reader, it can be hardly thought himself knows what he does say : For to what purpose does he talk here of the New Testament, taking that phrase in the New Testament fence. The New Testament sure he knows took not place till the death of the Testator, when Circumcision had a period put to it: And that the spirit was promised or given to the Jews or people of God under the first Testament, to be unto them as the seal of the Covenant as then administred, is an assertion that must owe its original to Mr. Danvers. But to bring the Reader out of this maze of nonsensical words, I shall affirm in a direct opposition to what he affirms, that Circumcision was not only a seal to the people of God and their seed under the first Testament, but was a seal unto them of the Covenant of Grace : It was a seal unto them of that Covenant established with *Abraham* and his seed in their generations; But that was the Covenant of Grace; Therefore Circumcision was a seal unto them of the Covenant of Grace : That that Covenant was the Covenant of Grace, the same under which Believers still are; and that Circumcision was a seal of that Covenant to all those whether grown persons or Infants, who as under the Covenant had it duely applyed to them; and that Infants were under that Covenant hath been proved already : Hence the Conclusion is undeniable. I shall only add one Argument more to prove what is affirmed, (*viz*) That Circumcision was a seal of the Covenant of Grace to all, whether Infants or grown persons, that were the due and proper subjects of it, and so dismiss this question.

Arg. When

Arg. When any Ordinance is appointed for, or applyed to several subjects under one and the same notion, look of what use that Ordinance is interpreted by the Holy Ghost himself, to be unto any of them; of the same use it is, and ought to be so interpreted unto all, supposing them capable of such an use, and God hath no where declared his will that it should not be of such an use to them for whom it is appointed, and to whom it is duly applyed. But Circumcision was appointed for and applyed to *Abraham* and all his seed, whether Believers or their seed under one and the same notion; and is interpreted by the Holy Ghost himself to be of this use (*viz.*) a seal of the Covenant of Grace unto *Abraham*: Therefore it is and ought to be interpreted of that use to all his seed, whether Believers or their seed, who are the due and proper subjects of it. For the major proposition, the truth of that is past all rational doubt, the denial of it will give a shrewd stroke to the faith and comfort of all believers.

For the minor proposition, that consists of two branches, First, that Circumcision was appointed for and applyed to *Abraham* and all his seed under one and the same notion (*viz.*) as the token of the Covenant, this is the express words of the text, *Gen. 17. 11.*

Secondly, That it is interpreted by the Holy Ghost himself to be unto him a seal of the Covenant of Grace: It is interpreted to be a seal of the promise of the Covenant of Grace, and consequently of the Covenant constituted and made up of those promises; that it was a seal of the promises of, or belonging to the Covenant of Grace;

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our Author himself acknowledgeth, and is undenyable from that Rom. 4. 11: and hence our conclusion will undeniably follow. We see then first, that the Covenant established with Abraham and his seed in their generations was the Covenant of Grace, the very same with that Believers are still under. Secondly, that the promises of the Covenant, and consequently the Covenant it self, did belong to Abrahams natural seed immediately proceeding from his own loyns, as well as to his spiritual : And Thirdly, that Circumcision was the seal of the Covenant of Grace; that Covenant of which it was the seal being the Covenant of Grace : As for what our Author adds in the close of this question concerning Baptism, as it concerns not the present question, so it is of no consideration in it self, though I may touch upon it in its proper place, yet let me say, as it does greatly reflect upon any to write, so it seems somewhat to reflect upon the understanding of all men, to answer such trifles as these : It arguing a very low ebb of humane reason that any man should need help to see the vanity of them : But to proceed,

5. The fifth thing our Author proposes for his examination is, *Whether Circumcision was administered to Believers as Believers, and to their seed after them as such, to which Baptism was to correspond.* This our Author vehemently denies, with what reason will soon appear ; only as previous to the consideration of his determination of this question, and giving the true solution of it, I must a little open the true sense and meaning of it : And thus, when it is queried, whether Circumcision

circumcision was administered to believers as believers? the meaning must needs be (otherwise we are not at all concern'd in it,) whether Circumcision was *de jure*, according to the institution administered, or to be administered to believers, as believers? that it might be *de facto* administered to others than *de jure* it ought to be is unquestionable: How or to whom it was at any time administered, concerns not us; but how or to whom it was administered, when administered according to the mind of God in the institution. So then the question is, whether Circumcision according to the will and appointment of God, was or ought to be administered to Believers as Believers? Why our Author useth New Testament terms and phrases, when speaking with respect to the Old Testament times he knows best. But by believers we are to understand such as according to that administration were to be accounted and reputed the Covenant people of God, such who according to the terms then proposed, might warrantably lay claim to that promise of Gods being a God to them; what was a sure ground for such a claim we determine not, it concerns not our present purpose: Our only enquiry at present is, whether Circumcision was according to the will of God administered to the Covenant people of God, or to persons as personally accepting of, and performing the terms or conditions of the Covenant as then administered, and that as such, and to their seed as such? Or whether it was not administered to men upon some other account, as suppose their relation to *Abraham* as his natural posterity or the like, and consequently whether there be

in this particular, a correspondence between the administration of Circumcision and the administration of Baptism, so that this one question may be branched out into three distinct questions.

I shall begin with the First: And that is, whether Circumcision was according to the will of God administered to believers as believers, that is, to persons as personally accepting of, and performing the conditions of the Covenant of Grace, as administered under the first Testament and that as such?

Our Author is still on the negative part, he is very positive it was not, and he gives this reason of his persuasion: For, says he, it was an Ordinance which by the institution belonged to all the natural lineage and posterity of Abraham, good or bad, without any such limitation as is put upon Baptism, if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayst: But sure he could not but suspect, there would be some sincere enquirers after the mind of God relating to Infant-baptism, who cannot pin their faith upon his sleeve; cannot rest satisfied with his bare word; therefore he should have proved this his assertion, which he attempts not to do, either by Scripture, Reason or Authority: And therefore without any more ado I must enter my dissent, and do on the contrary affirm, that Circumcision whenever administered to the Adult, in case it was administered according to the institution, it was to believers as believers, taking that term believers as before opened. Now the clearing up and proving this so highly conduced unto the establishing the Doctrine and practice of Infant-baptism, I shall somewhat largely insist upon it,

and

and for the proof of it I would offer these two Arguments.

First, If all the Adult or grown persons that ever had Circumcision duly administered unto them were believers, and there was no other ground upon which it could be administered to them, then it was administered to them as believers: But all the Adult or grown persons universally, that had Circumcision duly administered to them were believers, and there was no other ground upon which it could be rightfully administered to them, Therefore, &c.

The consequence in the major proposition, I conceive will meet with no opposition: I suppose if it be evident, that all grown persons universally, none excepted, that had Circumcision administered according to the institution were believers, and there was no other ground but only their faith, or personal acceptation and performance of the terms of the Covenant, upon which it could be rightfully applyed to them, then this consequence will evidently follow, they must needs have it administered to them as believers. 'Tis therefore only the minor proposition that needs proof; and in order to a more clear proceeding in the proof of it, we must necessarily distinguish of the Adult or grown persons who had Circumcision administered to them; and thus some of them were *sui juris*, had a full liberty and freedom of choice whether to accept or not accept of the Covenant upon such terms; others were *alterius juris*, under the dominion and dispose of some other person: Thus for all the Adult in *Abrahams* or any other believers family,

who were servants either born in the house, or bought with money: Now what was the case of this latter sort of grown persons, and how far the determination of the question before us as it relates unto them concerns our present purpose shall be considered hereafter. At present, let it be remembred, that what I affirm, it is only of persons who were *sui juris*, who were at their own dispose, and I say in respect of such all and that universally that ever had Circumcision rightfully administered to them, they were Believers in the fence before opened: This will appear by instancing in all those that the Scripture records to have had Circumcision administered to them, when adult or grown to ripeness of years; and shewing that they were believers. And thus the Scripture gives us no account of any circumcised when adult, but *Abraham* and those of his posterity whose Circumcision was omitted in the wilderness, and such who from among the Gentiles became proselytes to the Jewish Church, and all those the Scripture evidently declares to have been believers.

First, For *Abraham* himself, none will deny that he was a believer: And therefore

Secondly, For those of his posterity whose Circumcision was omitted in the wilderness, and who were circumcised at their first entrance into the land of *Canaan*, an account of which we have *Josh. 5. 3. &c.* Now that these were believers, is sufficiently evident, for

First, God himself gives this testimony of them, that they were such as had cleaved to him when others had apostatized from him, *Deut. 4.*

Secondly, They were such as had newly renewed their Covenant with God, they had avouched God to be their God, and he had avouched them to be his people, twenty sixth of Deut. 17, 18. Verses, compared with the twenty ninth of Deuteronomy, the beginning : These two things sufficiently evidence these to be Believers, and they had done nothing to evidence their insincerity , but had several wayes evidenced it, and therefore .

Thirdly , for such who from among the Gentiles did become Proselytes to the Jewish Church : Now I do not remember that the Scriptures do record any particular instance of any of these to have been circumcised ; but that such were to be , and that some such were circumcised is sufficiently clear from Scripture , and that when any such had circumcision rightly administered to them , that they were believers is evident.

First , from the qualification presupposed to their regular receiving circumcision , they must be such as would keep the Passover to the Lord , twelfth of Exodus forty eighth Verse : Mark , it was not enough that they did desire to keep the Passover , but they must be such as did profess-  
ly propose that end to themselves , viz. to keep *as* to the Lord , and Passover here seems to be put per *Synechdochē* partis , for the whole Worship of God ; and so the meaning is this : if any would give up themselves to God , and take him for their God , and worship and serve him according to the Ordinances of Worship then instituted ; they must be circumcised : So that the qualifica-

tions requisite to their circumcision do necessarily imply them to be believers.

Secondly, this is evident from God's alike entering into Covenant with them, as he did with the Jewes, *Deut. 29. 11, 15.* Now God's entering into Covenant with them doth necessarily imply them to be Believers, in as much as the Covenant, when entred with grown persons, is mutual, as God avoucheth such to be his people; so they must avouch him to be their God; otherwise the Covenant could not be entred with them.

Thirdly, this is yet further evident by the descriptions the Holy Ghost gives of such Proselytes; thus they are sometimes described by *their putting their trust under the wings of the God of Israel, Ruth 2. 12.* Sometimes by *their taking bold of the Covenant, and joyning themselves to the Lord, Isaiah 56;* which, though it be a Prophesie of the conversion of the Gentiles in New Testament Times, yet plainly alludes to the Proselytes under the first Testament, and shews us what they did or ought to do in order to their incorporation into the Church of the Jews; and as a further confirmation of this, Jewish Authors give us a large account what care was taken in the admission of Proselytes to circumcision, lest they should have some respect in their desiring of it; thus they diligently enquired whether they were not fallen in love with some Jewish woman, and the like: So that from what hath been said, it fully appears that all those universally, that had circumcision rightly administered to them, they were believers:

If any shall say ; there might be some other ground upon which circumcision was administered to them, let that ground be shewed ; If the Scriptures declare no other ground, then we may conclude there was none ; But the Scriptures declare no other ground, Therefore we may conclude there was none ; and that there was indeed no other ground upon which circumcision was administered to them will more fully appear by our second Argument, which is

Secondly , if none of *Abraham's Lineage or Posterity*, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own Loyns could have circumcision duly administered to them upon that ground or account of their relation to him as his natural seed , then none could have it rightfully administered to them upon any other ground than their own personal faith, or acceptance and performance of the terms of the Covenant ; and consequently all that had circumcision rightfully administered to them it was as believers : But the former is true ; Therefore the latter.

For the consequence in the major Proposition, that is grounded upon this supposition (*viz.*) That mens relation to *Abraham* as his Children, though mediately descended from him, is the chief and principal ground that can be imagined to be a sufficient ground upon which circumcision could be rightfully administered to any ; now if it could not be rightfully administered upon that ground , much less upon any other : But I judge (and therefore shall surcease any further proof of it) this will receive a ready acknowledgment from our opposers themselves ,

hence

hence our Author only instanceth in this as the ground upon which circumcision could be administered to persons whether good or bad.

It is the Minor that requires proof, our Author asserts the direct contrary, but how unreasonably we shall now see; That then which we are to prove is this, viz. that none of Abraham's Posterity or Lineage beyond those immediately descending from his own Loyns, could have circumcision administered to them according to Divine Institution upon that ground, viz. their relation to him as his Children, and consequently none else could have it rightfully administered to them upon any other ground whatsoever; but whoever had it rightfully administered to them, it was as they were believers; this I shall prove by this Argument; If circumcision could be administered to none of Abraham's Lineage or Posterity, whether Infants or grown persons; but upon the account of their precedent interest in and right to the Covenant and the promises thereof, of which it was the token; and none of Abraham's adult seed mediately proceeding from him had a right to or interest in that Covenant, but such as did personally accept of and perform the conditions thereof, then none of his adult Lineage or Posterity mediately descended from him could have Circumcision rightfully administered to them upon the ground or account of that their relation to him as his natural Children mediately descended from him; But the former is true; Therefore the latter: Here again the Consequence in the Major Proposition will have no gainsay, but the Minor needs proof, Now

that

that consists of two Propositions.

First, that none ought according to the Institution to have Circumcision administered to them, but such as had a precedent interest in, and right to the Covenant and the promises of it; this is too evident to admit of any rational contradiction; for

First, it is evident from the notion under which circumcision was commanded; it was commanded under that notion, viz. as the token of the Covenant: Now how unreasonable would it be to imagine that God should appoint circumcision to be applied to any under that notion as the token of his Covenant, who had no right to or interest in the Covenant; how could it be the token of the Covenant to any uninterested in the Covenant; but of this more elsewhere.

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Secondly, this is evident, because the application and reception of Circumcision was a keeping the Covenant; now how the Covenant can be said to be kept by the application and reception of Circumcision, unless the subjects to whom it was applied were in Covenant is impossible to be imagined; can a person keep the Covenant that is not in Covenant? What is keeping the Covenant, but a performing the conditions of the Covenant on man's part? And can any man perform the conditions of the Covenant, and yet have no right to, or interest in the Covenant, or the promises of it?

Thirdly, this is further evident, because interest in the Covenant is the ground of the command concerning the application and reception of circumcision.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, this is yet further evident, because otherwise God could not truly say of Circumcision, when duly applied, it is the token of the Covenant between him, and the party to whom it is applied; of both these things I have spoken largely in the place forecited.

Fifthly, it is evident from hence, *viz.* because otherwise it had been the universal duty of all *Abraham's* natural seed, whether those descended from *Ishmael* and *Esau*, or from *Isaac*, to have continued the practice of circumcision, notwithstanding their utter apostasie from and rejection of God, and his utter rejection of them from being his people: But who can imagine that circumcision was or could have been duly applyed to the *Edomites* or *Ishmalites* when acting in wayes of greatest opposition to, and rebellion against God? and what absurdities would follow upon such an assertion might easily be declared: It is also inconsistent with what *our Author* himself hath elsewhere affirmed of circumcision: But why should I enlarge upon the confirmation of that, the truth of which shines forth with a noon-light clearnes. And from what hath been said, it undeniably follows, that none were circumcised by vertue of any command from God, but such as were received into Covenant; contrary to what *our Author* affirms in his resolution of the first question; but let that suffice for the confirmation of the first Proposition.

2. *Propos.* The second Proposition, is that none of *Abraham's* adult seed, none of his natural seed grown up to years of maturity, had an interest

interest in or right to the Covenant or promises thereof , but such as did personally accept of and perform the terms or conditions of the Covenant, or according to our Author's Phrase, were believers.

This I have proved by three Arguments elsewhere , let me add

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*Arg. 1.* First, if any of *Abraham's* Lineage or Posterity, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own Loyns , had a right to or interest in the Covenant meerly as of his Lineage and Posterity, then all his Lineage and Posterity had a like right to and interest in the Covenant ; But all his Lineage and Posterity had not an interest in , or right to the Covenant : Therefore none had meerly as of his Lineage and Posterity : The truth of the consequence in the major proposition stands firm upon that universally received Maxim, *A quatenus ad omne valet consequentia* ; look what may be predicated of , or may be laid claim to by any one man , *quatenus homo* , meerly as a man, that may be predicated of , and laid claim to by all men universally ; so in this case , but now it is infallibly certain that all the Lineage and Posterity of *Abraham* had not an interest in the Covenant , therefore none of them had meerly as his Lineage and Posterity.

*Arg. 2:* Secondly , if *Abraham's* natural Lineage and Posterity, beyond those immediately proceeding from his own Lovns, had had an interest in and right to the Covenant meerly as his Lineage and Posterity , then Covenant breaking on their part had been impossible ; But Covenant breaking

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breaking on their part was not impossible, There-  
fore, &c.

The consequence in the major proposition is evident by this, *viz.* Because then their relation to *Abraham* as his Lineage and Posterity had been the only and alone condition of the Covenant on their parts, nothing more had been simply and absolutely necessary to their interest in and right to the Covenant; but only that their relation to *Abraham*: As in the case of his Children immediately proceeding from his own Loyns; they had an interest in the Covenant merely as his natural seed, and hence nothing more was necessary to that their interest, but only their descent from and relation to him as his Seed or Children: So in case the Covenant had extended to all his natural Lineage and Posterity, as it did to those immediately proceeding from his own Loyns, their case had been one and the same: Now there can be no breach of the Covenant on man's part, but through his failing and coming short in the conditions of the Covenant: Hence suppose the Jews mere relation to *Abraham* as his Lineage and Posterity had been the alone condition of their interest in the Covenant, it would have been impossible for them to break the Covenant; in as much as their sin, whether of omission or commission could not dissolve that their relation to *Abraham*: No moral evil can dissolve a natural relation; hence while their relation to *Abraham* as his Lineage and Posterity had continued, their Covenant interest would have continued. But now (which is our minor Proposition) that Covenant breaking

ing was not impossible unto them, the rejection of *Ishmael* and his Posterity , of *Esan* and his Posterity , of the ten Tribes first , and after of the *Jews* , is abundant evidence : How such as are received into the Covenant of Grace in their infancy , may be said to break Covenant ; and how that their breach of Covenant is consistent with the unchangeableness of the Covenant of Grace, and with the Doctrine of the Saints perseverance I have shewed elsewhere.

Arg. 3. If *Abraham*'s natural Lineage and Posterity , beyond those proceeding from his own Loyns , had ~~not~~ an interest in , and right to the Covenant, merely as such, then none of them could have been justly and righteously , finally cut off, excluded from, or cast out of , either the Covenant or Commonwealth of *Israel* , either by the immediate hand of God , or by any Ecclesiastical censure ; But some of the Lineage or Posterity of *Abraham* might be justly and righteously cut off, excluded from , and cast out of, both the Covenant and Commonwealth of *Israel* , and that either by the immediate hand of God, or by an Ecclesiastical censure ; Therefore, &c.

The consequence in the major Proposition is firm upon this ground , viz. that nothing could be a just cause for such a cutting off, or excluding from , and casting out of either the Covenant or Commonwealth of *Israel* , but what did nullifie their interest in the Covenant : To deprive a man of what he hath a just interest in , and title to is unjust ; now if the interest of the *Jews* in the Covenant did merely depend upon their relation to *Abraham* , as his Lineage or Posterity , it is impossible

impossible their interest could cease while that their relation did continue, and consequently for them, or any of them to have been finally cut off from, or cast out of either the Covenant or commonwealth of *Israel*, either by the immediate hand of God, or by any Ecclesiastical censure, had been unjust or unrighteous: But now that some of them or any of them, in some cases might be justly and righteously finally cut off, excluded from, and cast out of either the Covenant, or Commonwealth of *Israel*; and that either by the immediate hand of God, or by some Ecclesiastical censure, is evident both from Scriptures and Jewish Authors. To what end were threatenings given out, unless their execution had been just and righteous? now how often does God threaten that whosoever should be guilty of such or such sins, *they should be cut off from their people?* and some of these cuttings off did extend to a final exclusion from the Covenant, and all the benefits of it: So that not to enlarge (though other arguments might be added) from what hath been said, it evidently appears that none of *Abrahams* lineage or posterity beyond those immediately proceeding from his own loyns, had an interest in the Covenant merely as such, and if none, then not the Adult, and consequently unto their interest there was indispensibly required their own personal faith: Thus we see both branches of our second argument fully proved: And hence the conclusion undeniably follows (*viz.*) that none of *Abrahams* adult seed, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own loyns, that were *surjuris*, (for of such we are yet speaking) had

Circumcision

Circumcision duly administered to them by virtue of their relation to him as his natural seed; and consequently whoever of them had Circumcision rightfully administered to them, it was as they were believers. But

Secondly, I shall a little touch upon the question, as it may concern such who were *alterius juris*, who were at the dispose, as being under the dominion, of others; of this sort were all those who were born in the houses of, or bought with money by Abraham, or any of the Covenant people of God in after ages, who had Circumcision administered to them when adult: The command was, *that he that was bought with money or born in the house should be circumcised*, as well as their natural children, and some of these might be, (as it is evident some of them in *Abrahams* family were) adult or grown persons: Now the question is, whether it was necessary in order to these, having Circumcision administered to them, that they should be believers, or whether such might not, yea ought not to have Circumcision administered, as merely appertayning to the family of the people of God whether they were good or bad?

Now for this I shall but briefly touch upon it, because it concerns not the practice in controversy between us, I shall therefore only offer to consideration these few things, and come to the second question.

First, That such as we now speak of had the promises of the Covenant, and consequently the Covenant it self extended to them, as well as they had or were to have Circumcision administered to them, this is evident both *a priori*, and *a posteriori*.

First, *A priori*, and thus it was promised to *Abraham*, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him, Gen. 12. 3. that is in him and in his seed, for so the promise is exprest when renewed to *Jacob*, Gen. 28. 14. and by seed, though we are to understand Christ as chiefly and principally, yet is the mystical seed of *Abraham*, as subordinate and lets principally, intended : So that both *Abraham* and his mystical seed are according to this promise made and constituted a blessing to their respective families, or their respective families are blessed in them ; and let it be observed, it is not only their natural children but their families that are interested in this blessing : Now this blessing was, interest in the Covenant, and hence it is that God promises, to be the God of all the families of *Israel*, Jer. 31. 1. and hence salvation is said to come to the houses of Believers, salvation is this day come to this house, says Christ of *Zacheus* his house : So the promise of salvation is made to the houses of believers, Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved and thy house, says *Paul* to the *Jaylor*, Acts. 16. All which Scriptures do shew, that *Abrahams* seed are blessings to their respective houses, and that they are so as they do convey an interest in the Covenant and promises thereof unto them.

Secondly, This is evident *a posteriori*, from the reference that Circumcision had to the Covenant, it was to be applyed to none but to such as were in Covenant, as has been before proved : So that I say, those to whom Circumcision was or was to be administred, they had a precedent right to and interest in the Covenant, they were under

under a promise of Gods being a God to them.

Secondly, I would offer this to consideration, that as *Abraham*, so all other Masters or Governors of families, they had a right to dispose of, and answerably they ought to dedicate those, we now speak of, up to God, and thereupon teach them his ways and command them as to take God for their God, so to walk in his ways. And hence it is to be observed, that none were to be circumcised but such as they had a right and power to dispose of in a subordination unto God, they were to be such as were properly *their own*, and hence it must needs be their duty to dedicate and give them up to God, and instruct them in his ways; and this God does, as I may so speak, promise to himself concerning *Abraham*, Gen. 18.9. *For I know Abraham that he will command his children and his household, and they shall keep the way of the Lord:* He will not only command his children but his household.

Thirdly, That as when the people of God are faithful in the discharge of their duty, God does usually concur with them therein with his blessing; so this command concerning the Circumcision of the persons we now speak of, seems to be grounded upon a supposal of both, (*viz.*) that the people of God were and would be faithful in the discharge of their duty towards those born in their house or bought with their money, and that they had a blessing attending them therein. And hence we may

Fourthly, conclude, that all those born in the house or bought with money, who were adult, did make such a visible profession of their owning

God as their God, and accepting of the Covenant as entered with them, as did give a rational ground to hope they were sincere therein. It cannot rationally be supposed that such should be received into the Church by Circumcision of whom they had just ground to conclude they should be immediately cast out again, as in case of their manifesting their non acceptance of the terms of the Covenant by any overt act, they ought to be. Surely if *Ishmael* one of *Abrahams* natural seed, was cast out upon the first discovery of his rejection of the Covenant, it cannot be rationally imagined, that any grown persons should be received into it, but upon a visible manifestation of their acceptance of it : So that the true resolution of this question, as it respects the persons we now speak of, is this, that though the Covenant extended to them, and they had a visible title to it as of, or belonging to such a Family, yet in order to the regular administration of Circumcision to them, it was necessary that they did visibly manifest their personal acceptance of it, and resolution to keep it : But this not concerning our main question, I shall add no more to it, but proceed to the second question, and that is,

*Quest. 2. Whether Circumcision was administered to the seed of Believers as such?* That is merely as the seed of such believing parents : Our Author still holds the negative, that they had not; we the affirmative that they had.

All the reason he gives for his persuasion is this, that no such qualification was required to an Infants Circumcision, that he should have a believing

ing parent : The vanity and ungroundedness of which sufficiently appears from what hath been already said, for if so be the due administration of Circumcision to the Adult aforeuncircumcised, did necessarily presuppose their faith as we have already seen it did, then past all rational doubt, unto the due administration of Circumcision to their Infants , it was necessary that they themselves should be believers : If faith was required to their own Circumcision, it must needs be alike required to their seeds Circumcision who derived their right thereunto from them : This might be further enlarged upon, but supposing the truth of what hath been already discoursed, the truth of what we here affirm will evidently appear to all rational and intelligent persons; for if so be, none could have Circumcision administered to them, but such as had an interest in and right to the Covenant, of which it was the sign or token: Then it undeniably follows , that Infants in order to the due administration of Circumcision to them, must needs have an interest in, and title to the Covenant : And how could Infants come to that interest? it could not be by any personal act of their own, it was not as related to *Abraham*, as of his lineage and posterity ; for we have seen already, that none of his lineage or posterity had actual and personal interest in the Covenant, beyond such as did immediately proceed from his own loyns, by vertue of their relation to him : Hence , their interest must needs arise from Gods extending his Covenant as entered with their parents unto them ; and the truth is that the promise to the seed, giving them

their interest in, and title to the Covenant is a branch of the Covenant as made with the parents: Now unto the parents entring & reception into the Covenant, their personal faith was required: From all, it will undenyably follow, that all Infants that had Circumcision duly administred to them, it was as they were the seed of believing parents.

And from all it will yet further follow, as I have elsewhere noted and desire may be carefully obserued, that all *Abrahams* natural race and posterity beyond those proceeding from his own loyns, and that in their Infant state; had the Covenant with the sign and token of it continued to them, and held their interest therein, till rejected of God (First at the transportation of the ten tribes by *Salmanazar*, and after at the coming in of the gospel-administration) not merely as his natural but as his spiritual or mystical seed: Children as grown up to years of maturity were to accept and take hold of the Covenant into which they had admission in their infancy, as the seed of believing parents by personal faith and obedience: Whereupon the consideration of their natural relation, either to *Abraham*, or their believing parents was laid aside, and they ceased to stand under the Covenant, by vertue of that their natural descent, either from *Abraham* or any of his seed, and now were continued under it, as being believers themselves, and as such did convey a right to the Covenant and token of it to their natural seed: So that the Church of the Jews was a spiritual and mystical not a carnal Church, as our Author without any true ground from scripture or reason calls it, it was constituted

ted and made up of *Abrahams* mystical seed, including their natural children immediately proceeding from their own loyns, and that only during their infant state: For being grown to years of maturity they ought, supposing their rejection of the Covenant, to have been by Church discipline ejected and cast out of the Church. I know what it is that makes what we now affirm so difficultly received by our opposers (*viz.*) the variety of evils, as Idolatry and the like so frequently charged upon that Church and people; but to the mind of wisdom, as *our Author* speaks, seriously weighing the large measure of the spirit then given forth, together with the terms of Covenant interest then proposed, and adding to both the consideration of several of the New Testament Churches, immediately after their plantation by the Apostles, the difficulty will soon be removed: But not to enlarge upon this, let that suffice for the second question proposed for examination, unto this fifth particular.

**Quest. 3.** Thirdly, whether Baptism do correspond to Circumcision as thus administred to Believers as Believers, and to their seed after them and that as such.

**Answ.** To which it is readily answered, that it does, and supposing the truth of what hath been said, will be easily granted by our opposers themselves: That Baptism is to be administred to believers as believers, when the adult, as being unbaptized before, become the subjects of it, is granted on all hands; and that it is to be administred to their seed after them, and that as such, is affirmed, and we hope sufficiently proved by us.

And supposing what hath been said in the resolution of the foregoing question be true, will not (I cannot but think) be gainsayd by any. Whence to add any thing more to this would be but a needless expence of time, only I shall add one Argument to prove, both the Covenant-interest and Baptism of the Infants of believers, and so proceed to the sixth question, and it is this.

*Arg.* If the Gospel Church be so incorporated into, and a continuation of the mystical or spiritual body of Christ and household of God, of which the Jews under the Old Testament were, as to make up with them but one body or household ; and the natural seed of the Jews by vertue of their Covenant-interest were of, and by the then token of the Covenant were incorporated into that body or household ; then the natural seed of believers by vertue of the same Covenant interest are of, and by the present token of the Covenant ought still to be incorporated into the same body of Christ or household of God, But the former is true, Therefore the latter. But to proceed

6. That which is further enquired into is, whether Baptism do succeed in the room, place, uses, and ends of Circumcision ?

Here our Author denies two things, and gives us several reasons, such as they are, of both his denials. First, he vehemently denies that *Baptism does succeed in the room and place of Circumcision.*

What he means by room and place, is somewhat questionable, that which only concerns us to enquire after is, Whether Baptism be the present sign or token of the Covenant, as Circumcision was of old ? Now that it is, and answerably

bly does succeed in the room and place of Circumcision, in that general notion and consideration of it, I have elsewhere abundantly proved, and shewed the vanity and insignificancy of what is objected concerning the spirits being the seal of the New Covenant, and therefore need add no more: I shall therefore only briefly weigh our Authors reasons and hasten.

First, His first reason is, because in case Baptism did succeed in the room and place of Circumcision, *then only males and not females would be baptized, because of old only males were circumcised.* To which I would reply, by asking our Author who told him so, how came he to know it would be thus or thus in case Baptism did succeed in the room and place of Circumcision? Might not God if it pleased him ordain a token of his Covenant, under the first Testament, that Males only were capable of, and upon the account of the incapability of Females not impose it upon them, and then lay that aside and ordain another token of the Covenant, to succeed in the room and place of the former, in that general notion of it, (*viz.*) as the token of it, of which Females were as capable as males, and thereupon require the application of it to them, as well as to Males? I say, why may it not be thus, if God so pleased? As we suppose it is sufficiently evident it hath so pleased him; who shall dictate unto God or enjoyn him as Elihu speaks, *the way he shall proceed in towards his Church?* Men may as well say were God so good and just as he stiles himself to be in his word, he would have made man otherwise

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wise, than he hath done; as say, in case this or that be true, then he would have ordered his Dispensations otherwise than he hath done; but what acceptation such bold questions, *why hast thou made me thus?* Will find with God, the Scripture foreshews us; but

Secondly, in case Baptism do succeed in the room and place of Circumcision, then *our Author* thinks not all but only some adult believers should have been baptized, and the ground of this his conceit is because, as he takes it for granted, *not all but only some believers were circumcised.*

*Answ.* This reason is much of the same nature with the former, only here is one mistake suggested, which was not in the former, and that is, that some, consequent to the Institution of Circumcision, who were to be accounted *Abraham's seed*, were not (he must mean as not being under any command from God) circumcised; this *our Author* dictates but attempts not at all to prove; and therefore I shall let it pass as a fond conceit, without the least shew of ground in Scripture, and only say, suppose this were true; yet how it should prove that Baptism does not succeed in the room and place of Circumcision, as the sign and token of the Covenant appears not, and therefore what was said to the former reason, may be said to this: But I say this reason being grounded upon a gross mistake it vanisheth, and comes to nothing; could *our Author* instance in any one person that was to be accounted one of *Abraham's seed*, and shew how, or where he had been exempted from the obligation of that Command, enjoying *Abraham*

braham and his Seed in their Generations to keep the Covenant , he would say somewhat, though not much to his purpose.

Thirdly , his third reason is, because *then the circumcised needed not to have been baptized :* Surely the Reader will judge me a man of no great employment , to throw away time upon such trifles ; Is our *Author* alone ignorant , that upon the Institution of Baptism , Circumcision ceased to be the Token of the Covenant ? or does he think it meet that any , that through their faith in Christ are continued in the Covenant , should be exempted from bearing , or had no need of the token of the Covenant ? But of this elsewhere : We see now of what consideration our *Authors* reasons are , whereby he endeavours to confirm his first denial ; and therefore

Secondly , let us see how he hath proved his second denial, *viz. That Baptism does not succeed Circumcision in regard of the use and ends of it :* How far it is necessary that there should be a correspondence between Baptism and Circumcision , in order to the proving the practice of Infant-Baptism , hath been already declared ; and from what hath been said , it will appear , that should all our *Authors* grounds , as he calls them , upon which he bottoms his denial be good , yet Baptism may succeed Circumcision as the sign and token of the Covenant , and as such serve to some uses and ends of Circumcision ; But let us see his Grounds ;

First, says he , *Circumcision was a sign of Christ to come in the flesh , but Baptism a sign that he was already*

Answ. I shall here again ask our Author this one question ; whether he thinks it was possible, for God to institute any sign or token of his Covenant, when once Circumcision was laid aside ? I suppose he will hardly deny this possible to infinite wisdom and power, if he say, it was simply and absolutely possible in it self, I would know, whether this Ordinance, whatever it should be, must needs be a sign of Christ to come in the flesh ? if it must, then Christ must be alwayes to come in the flesh ; such kind of doughty grounds Anabaptists build their persuasion upon , but it may be his other grounds are more substantial ; Therefore,

Secondly, sayes he, Circumcision was to be a partition wall between Jews and Gentiles , but Baptism testified the contrary, viz. that all are now one in Christ.

Answ. I must again ask our Author whether he think there is no difference between a wall and a door in the wall , and whether both must be of one and the same use ? I alwayes judged that a wall was to keep out, a door to let in, and Circumcision was as our Author himself acknowledgeth, a solemn Ordinance for the admission of persons, whether Jews or Gentiles , into the Church ; he expressly calls it a door, Page 27. and so is Baptism ; the truth is, Circumcision was not the wall, nor any part of it, so that here they agree, being both of one and the same use ; but

Thirdly , sayes he , Circumcision initiated the carnal Seed into the carnal Church , and gave a right

right unto carnal Ordinances ; but it is quite otherwise with Baptism.

*Answ.* I must yet once more desire our Author to resolve me one question further , and here I would be serious with him , and that is , whether he thinks Christ had any visible Church or Mystical Body , of which himself was Head , under the first Testament ? if not , how is the Church of the Jews called his Spouse , his Wife ? If yea , who were the persons this Church or Body of Christ was constituted and made up of ? But I hope I have sufficiently proved , that the Jewish Church was a mystical spiritual Church , or the mystical spiritual Body of Christ , and so Circumcision and Baptism serve for the same use and ends , viz. to initiate or give a solemn entrance and admission into the mystical Body , Church , or Kingdom of Christ , as visible here upon Earth .

Fourthly , Our Author adds another Ground , viz. Circumcision , sayes he , was to be a bond and obligation to keep the whole Law of Moses , but Baptism witnessed that Moses his Law was made void , and that Christ's Law was only to be kept .

But of what use was it before the Law was given ? And if it was of some use before the Law was in being ; why may not Baptism be , if not of the same use ( which yet certainly it is ) yet of such use , both to the adult and Infants , as might be a sufficient ground for its Institution and Application to both , though the Law be now abrogated : But to say that Circumcision was an obligation to keep the whole Law of Moses , any further than the Covenant of Grace estab-

lished

blished with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations did oblige them thereunto, is a great mistake, Circumcision obliged to keep the Law of Christ, and so does Baptism.

Fifthly, the fifth ground our Author lays to what he hath asserted, viz. that Baptism does not succeed Circumcision to the use and ends of it, as he speaks, is this, *Circumcision sayes he, was administered to all Abraham's natural Seed, without any profession of Faith, Repentance, or Regeneration, whereas Baptism, to be administered to the spiritual seed of Abraham, was only upon profession of Faith, Repentance and Regeneration.*

*Answ.* But what does this concern the uses and ends, either of Circumcision or Baptism? This only concerns the Subjects, the one was, and the other is to be administered to.

*Reply.* But it may be it will be said, though it do not directly concern the matter in hand, yet consequentially it does, for if so be, the Subjects of Circumcision and Baptism are so vastly different, the use and ends cannot be one and the same.

*Answ.* But then we absolutely deny the grounds from whence this consequence is drawn; we deny that Circumcision was administered to all *Abraham's natural Seed*; yea, that it was administered, according to the Institution, to any of his natural Seed, as such, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own Loyns: And so that Baptism is to be administered only upon Profession of Faith and Repentance; our Author knows, it is the question between us, and consequently, the bare asserting of it is *petitio principii,*

cipi, a begging the question.

*Reply.* But it will be said, there are several instances produced, which being compared do irrefragably prove it.

*Answ.* Take his instances severally, each apart by themselves, and they are but a begging the question three times over; and how we shall compare them together, so as to make any thing more of them, I know not, neither does he give us any direction to help us therein; for whereas

First, the first of his instances, as he calls them, is this, sayes he, *a carnal Parent, and a fleshly begetting by the legal birth priviledge gave right to Circumcision, whereas 'tis a spiritual begetting, by a spiritual Parent, gives only a true right to Baptism.*

*Answ.* To let pass the odness and uncouthness of his phrases, the thing that is asserted is this, that a natural dissent from natural parents, be the parents what they would, gave right to Circumcision; whereas tis only faith & repentance as professed, give right to Baptism, which is the thing in question, and is denied by us: So for his other instances, they still amount but to this, that none ought to be baptized but the Adult, capable of personal holiness and of believing, which is still the question between us & is denied by us. But not to wast time about such trifles, could our Author have produced any one instance of any one who, neglecting to take hold of the Covenant, did yet convey a right to Circumcision, to his children, he had said somewhat more to the purpose: But I shall willingly refer it to the judgments of all unbyassed

byassed persons, whether these instances do more satisfactorily prove, that Circumcision was to be administred to all *Abrahams* natural seed, than what I have said in handling the last foregoing question does prove the contrary:

For our Authors sixth ground, I shall only say thus much; that as Circumcision was a sign and token of the whole Covenant, as then administred; so Baptism is the sign and token of the Covenant as now administred: That is for his sixth question, his seventh shall be considered, if the Lord will, hereafter.

Now then these questions being truly stated and resolved, our Argument drawn from the Covenant for the establishment of the practice we plead for not only abides firm, but is considerably strengthened: For if so be the Covenant believers are still under be the same Covenant of Grace that was at first entred & established with *Abraham* as the Father of the faithful, & this Covenant as then entred with him did extend to & take in his natural seed immediately proceeding from his own loyns & that as such, and was continued in the same extent and latitude to all the people of God under the first Testament still extended to & taking in their natural seed immediately proceeding from their own loyns, & this not as either parents or children stood related to *Abraham* as his natural lineage & posterity, but as the immediate parents were believers themselves; (all which things we have proved) Then the Covenant must needs be continued in the same extent and latitude still, (*viz.*) as extending to and taking in children with their believing parents. And this is evident not only from

from the utter silence of the Scriptures as to any alteration or change that God has made in the tenour of the Covenant, but from variety of scripture demonstrations that he has indeed made none; but does continue it in the same extent and latitude as formerly he did. Whence that the Covenant does still belong to the Infant-seed of believers is abundantly evident: And in as much as the Covenant does belong to them, the token of the Covenant does also belong and ought to be applyed unto them; which again appears not only from that command Gen. 17. 9. which is still in force, and alike requires the application of Baptism the present token of the Covenant as of old it did Circumcision, the then token of the Covenant: But from the Apostle Peters laying interest in the promise as a sufficient ground for the application of Baptism, as also from our Lord Christs having appointed Baptism for the solemn admission of all those into his visible body, kingdom, and family who according to his will ought to be admitted thereto: But these things are largely proved in that forementioned discourse whither I must refer the Reader.

For this see my  
Infant-Baptism  
from Heaven  
from page 63  
to 128.

## C H A P. VI.

The Author's fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh Particulars to disprove Infant-Baptism considered, their weakness and vanity shewed, with some special Considerations to satisfie Christians about the validity of their Baptism, as administred by sprinkling or pouring Water upon the Face : The close of the whole.

**F**ourthly, a fourth Argument that our Author layes down for the disproof of Infant-Baptism is a supposed alteration or change made in the Ceremony of Baptism, viz. from dipping or plunging into sprinkling, or pouring a little water upon she head or face; whence he concludes it cannot be Christ's Ordinance of Baptism.

*Answ.* First, were it granted that such a change were made, how that should disprove the practice of Infant-Baptism, as absolutely considered, he neither attempts to, nor can shew. Nay his reasoning seems to grant, that Baptism when administred unto them by dipping is Christ's Ordinance of Baptism. For the old rule is, *veritas affirmati axiomatis est fundamentum veritatis negati.* Now to say that Baptism as administered by dipping is only Christ's Ordinance of Baptism, plainly implies that when it is so administered (as it is certain in some places, and by some

some it hath been, and still is) then it is his Ordinance of Baptism. So that as this Argument seems to grant that sometimes Infant-Baptism is Christ's Ordinance; so the utmost it can prove is, that as sometimes administred, it is none of his Ordinance; But

Secondly, That there is any such change or alteration is denyed, and notwithstanding what *our Author* hath said still wants solid proof. But for this, see the preface of my Infant-baptism from Heaven, as also Mr. *Wills* his answer to Mr. *Danvers*, and others, that have largely handled this question, a question wholly distinct from that concerning the subjects of Baptism, yet I shall touch upon it by and by. Therefore to go on.

Fifthly, His fifth Argument is drawn from the variety of mischiefs, absurdities, and contradictions that he imagines may be justly charged upon the practice of Infant-baptism. And a practice justly chargeable with so many mischiefs, absurdities, and contradictions as *our Author* conceives this to be, is no ways like to be an ordinance of Christ.

*Ans.* In the general it may be observed, how easie a thing it is for men to imagine and cry out mischiefs, absurdities, and contradictions, and by certain artifices, as ambiguous terms and phrases, putting that for the cause which is not, &c. make them seem really such to persons of weaker capacities; whereas they are either merely imaginary, or else not at all to be charged upon the doctrine or practice opposed. Whilst themselves are guilty of no small absurdities and contradictions in framing and charging them therupon.

This is too evident in *our Authors* case: Let us briefly view his charge in the several branches of it.

First, For the mischiefs that he supposeth Infant-baptism may be charged with; and he reckons up no fewer than ten.

First, *By it Christ's order in the Commission is altered.*

*Answ.* That this is merely imaginary, is evident from what hath been already said, to which I must refer the Reader.

Secondly, *By it the subjects of Baptism are changed.*

*Answ.* But that's the question under debate, and to beg the question and then bring in what is begged, and charge that upon the practice controverted as a mischief to disprove it self, is neither civil nor rational.

Thirdly, *By it all the holy ends of Baptism are frustrated.*

*Answ.* That Infants are incapable of all the ends of Baptism *our Author* himself hath not yet affirmed: Now if it be the will of our Lord Christ that it should be applyed unto them with respect unto those ends they are capable of (as I hope it sufficiently appears that it is) the application of it unto them cannot be rationally supposed to be a frustration of any; much less of all the holy ends of Baptism. It cannot be a frustration of those ends with respect unto which it is not applyed, nor can it be a frustration of those ends they are capable of, and with respect unto which it is applyed. Were all the holy ends of Circumcision frustrated as it was applyed to *Abraham's*

bams seed, because they were not capable of all those ends for which it was applyed to Abraham himself?

Fourthly, *By it the right order and manner of the administration of Baptism is altered, viz. from dipping into sprinkling, or pouring a little water upon the Head or Face.*

*Answ.* This we have had but just now. I shall only say, will Mr. Danvers bring a plain Scripture to prove that Baptism was by the Apostles ministred by dipping or plunging, I shall engage to bring a plain Scripture for the Baptism of Infants: But suppose that such an inversion or change; yet it is very unreasonable for him to charge it upon Infant-baptism, he knowing full well, that that manner of baptizing was in use, though not before Infant-baptism was indeed practised, yet before he will allow it so to be, he knows who speaks of clinical Baptism.

Fifthly, *By it many errors and false doctrines have been introduced.* And he instanceth in five.

First, *That it is to take away Original Sin.*

Secondly, *To work Grace and Regeneration, and to effect Salvation by the work done.*

Thirdly, *That it is an Apostolical Tradition.*

Fourthly, *That Children have Faith, and are Disciples of Christ.*

Fifthly, *That all Children of believing parents are in the Covenant of Grace, and federally holy.*

*Answ.* As for his third and fifth supposed errors, they are [taking] Apostolical tradition in that fence in which the Fathers and all Orthodox Divines take it] great truths. As for his three others, I shall only say that Baptism is no way

chargeable with them; neither hath our Author attempted to prove that it is: To charge all the errors that some have held with reference to any practice, upon the practice it self, is absurd and ridiculous: Will any be so vain as to charge the Lords Supper with all those errors that some have held about or with reference to it?

Sixthly, By defiling and polluting the Church, and that three ways.

First, By bringing false matter thereinto, viz; such who are not Saints by calling.

*Answ.* 'Tis no defiling the Church to admit those to whom God hath given a place in it.

Secondly, By laying a foundation to much ignorance and prophaneness. And

Thirdly, To joyn them together by confounding the World, and the Church.

*Ansvv.* Our Author himself acquits the Practice of Infant-baptism from both these charges a little after, only let it be observed, that all Infants in Mr. Danvers his account are of the World. Now our Lord Christ is express, *he prays not for the World:* And how any can be saved having no benefit by the intercession of Christ; if he doth, I must profess my self not to know?

Seventhly, By it those many humane traditions and inventions of Antichrist, it is attended with, as practised by that party, are introduced and established.

*Answ.* Must every Ordinance be charged with introduction of all those humane traditions and inventions tis attended with amongst superstitious men: Alas! what ordinance then would be left to the Church.

Eighthly, Infant-baptism, by the good will of

*our Author*, must bear the blame of all those debates and contentions amongst men, relating to the practice of it. Yea, and

Ninthly, Of all that bitter hatred, wrath, strife, enmity and persecutions that are found among men against those that oppose it.

*Answ.* If such trivial reasonings be sufficient to disprove any doctrine or practice; not only the Christian but even all Religion in the general, that at least ingageth men to morality, would soon be cashiered out of the world. *Our Author* knows, such reasonings make as much against what he pleads for, as what he opposeth.

Tenthly, The last mischief *our Author* hath seen meet to load Infant-baptism with is, that by it the whole Antichristian interest is confirmed.

*Answ.* This is a heavy charge indeed could it be proved, but let us see what he hath said in order thereunto. And here he refers us to his preface, and he thinks he hath made it so plain that every one that runs may read it: Strange confidence! but a little to examine what hath been said, and it is this. If the very act of sprinkling or pouring water upon the head or face of the child, with the charms attending must give Grace, Regenerate, take away sin, save the soul, add to the Church, give right to all Ordinances, as Mr. Pope bath ordained? Then these two things will follow.

First, That Christs conversion, and the powerful preaching of the Gospel, his means to effect it must be slighted, ignorance and prophaneness the true interest of that state necessarily brought in.

Secondly, Hereby the nations necessarily oblige themselves by receiving his law to embrace also his doctrine,

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* But what if the practice of Infant-baptism do not necessitate any to ascribe any of these things to the very act however administered? And what if vastly the major part of Orthodox Pedobaptists whether Ancient or Modern do disclaim the ascribing of any of these effects unto the very act of Baptism, and on the other hand do receive and walk in the practice of it, in obedience to the law of Christ, and that looking upon it as one of his holy institutions appointed for such holy ends and purposes as Infants are capable of, what then will follow but this? That Mr. Danvers is one of the most unworthy and disingenuous men that ever put pen to paper.

Secondly, For the absurdities he conceits may be justly charged upon that practice we plead for. And thus the

First absurdity is, *That persons may have regeneration and grace before calling.*

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* I judge our Author will have hard work to acquit himself of this absurdity, unless it be by running into a greater, I would only ask him whether he thinks any Infants are saved, Or whether they can be saved without regeneration? But

Secondly, Suppose this should be an absurdity, which yet it is far from; how Infant-baptism should be justly charged with it, he neither doth nor can shew.

Secondly, *That persons may be visible-Church members before conversion.*

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* If he had said members of the visible Church, he had shewed more ingenuity. But be they either members of the visible Church or

visible

visible Church members, wherein the absurdity lies he tells us not. Its certain they sometimes were members of the visible Church; must then all the wise dispensations of God be absurd, because they sute not every mans fancy?

Thirdly, *That persons may believe, repent, be baptized and saved by the faith of another.*

*Answ.* But a little before Infant-baptism was charged as laying a foundation to this error, *viz.* that Infants have faith, here it is charged with a quite contrary absurdity. Surely it cannot be justly charged with both that error and this absurdity. But if any have been so weak as to affirm the one or the other, yet it is disingenious to charge that upon the practice it self.

Fourthly, *That types and shadows are profitable, when the antitype and substance is come, introducing thereby the legal birth-priviledg, the carnal seed, the typical holiness, the national Church, with no body knows what more, to the reviving Judaism and outing Christianity.*

*Answ.* Fortiter calumniare, et aliquid herebit, seems to be one of Mr. Danvers, as well as Machiavels maxims. That the birth-priviledge of the seed of Believers which is their interest in the Covenant or federal holiness and right to the sign and token of the Covenant did either appertain to the ceremonial law, or was typical of any thing under the Gospel is insinuated, without the least shew or shadow of proof, either from Scripture, Reason, or humane Authority. Therefore let him please himself with his own fancy, only with this memento, that of every idle word, whether written or spoken; men must give an account at the day of Judgment.

Fifthly

Fifthly, That the better to exclude Believers Baptism, new Church Covenants are invented, to enter the visible Church by, instead thereof.

*Answ.* This can proceed from no other original, but either gross ignorance of his opposers principles and practices, or from meer prejudice if not something worse. Let it be proved that Baptism was appointed for the admission of persons into particular Churches, or produce the Author that hath invented such new Covenants for the end here specified by him.

Lastly, For the Contradictions our Author supposeth Infant-baptism may be justly charged with. And thus

First, He conceits that this practice doth contradict what the pleaders for it do assert concerning Baptism: *They assert (saith he) that Baptism is a symbol of present Regeneration wrought, and yet applyed to ignorant, unconverted babes uncapable of Regeneration.*

*Answ.* This is no other contradiction than what might be charged upon Circumcision according to the acknowledgment of our opposers themselves. They acknowledge that Circumcision was a symbol of heart Circumcision, (see our Author page 223. See Mr. Tomes his examen page 83.) and (I suppose) by heart Circumcision they mean Regeneration; and yet Circumcision was applyed to Babes as ignorant, and as uncapable of Regeneration as any Infants now are. Will they reconcile the contradiction as it respects Circumcision? And, I doubt not, they will save us a labour of reconciling it as it respects Baptism. But

Secondly,

Secondly, That this is a meer imaginary contradiction, whether it respects Circumcision or Baptism, will appear if we consider that those that affirm the one or the other to be a sign or symbol of present Regeneration, mean, it is so with respect to the Adult: Now I have already shewed that both Circumcision and Baptism might be appointed for different ends and uses, with reference to different persons, and yet serve to some general uses with reference to all. What contradiction is it to say that Circumcision was and Baptism is a symbol of present Regeneration actually wrought, when applyed to the Adult; and yet apply the one or the other according to divine directions to Infants for those ends with reference to which it is appointed unto them: And what hath been said for the reconciling these contradictions may suffice for the reconciling his third and fourth imaginary contradictions, and as for his second I shall consider it under the sixth particular laid down for the disproof of Infant-baptism. And therefore to come to his Fifth which he thus expresseth.

5. *That the baptismal Covenant enters into the visible Church, and yet they deny to Church members the priviledges thereof, and separate from them without any warrantable cause shewed, or orderly proceeding either against them, or they that do own them as such.*

*Answ.* If our Author knows of any that are guilty of these contradictions, he may do well to convince them of their errors, but let not their mistake be irrationally charged upon the practice it self.

Sixthly, That we separate from Rome as the false Church, and yet own their Baptism the foundation stone thereof: And others that pretend separation from national and parish Churches, and disown the baptizing of all good and bad with the sinful ceremonies attending it, yet if Papist or Protestant upon their own terms tender themselves to their fellowship, they are received without renouncing their sinful Baptism, and performing it in that way they judge right.

*Answ.* Had our Author any solid reason to oppose our practice by, sure he would not set up such bugbears that himself knows can only scare children. But for this pretended contradiction it consists of two branches.

First, That we separate from Rome as the false Church, and yet own their Baptism, the foundation stone thereof.

*Answ.* That Infant-baptism is either Romes Baptism, or the foundation stone thereof, is (as may justly be suspected) suggested by our Author meerly to cast an *odium* upon that practice, and that contrary to his own knowledge: That any Pope, or popish council was the inventor or institutor of Infant-baptism, he hath not made so much as in the lowest degree probable, If suppose he will not have the confidence to affirm that whatever doctrine or practice hath been confirmed by any Pope or popish council is Antichristian. If he should he must by his own confession cast out the Baptism of Believers, as well as of Infants. Let this then pass for a meer calumny, without the least shew of reason for it.

Secondly, For the other branch, that concerns

not

not Infant-baptism at all as such, inasmuch as *our Author* knows full well, it is all one as to our receiving or not receiving such as he mentions, whether they were baptized in Infancy or when Adult. And therefore to divert to matters wholly excentrical to the question would be but a mere *dispendium temporis*: I shall only say, if any of those mentioned can receive no satisfaction about their Baptism will they be baptized again? supposing they will take in their Infant-seed with them, they shall not be opposed by me.

Seventhly, *Our Author* hath not yet done, he hath one thing more that he conceits a contradiction attending Infant-baptism, and that is this: *That we that plead for it do own the doctrine of perseverance, and do disown falling from Grace, and yet baptize all the Children of believers, because we conclude them to be in the Covenant of Grace, and yet teach them conversion, and in case of unbelief reject them as reprobates.*

*Answ.* As this proceeds from, if not wilful, yet very great ignorance, so it fully acquits us from two of those mischiefs he hath afore charged the practice of Infant-baptism with, for if we teach the seed of believers conversion, (as he speaks) and in case of unbelief reject them, how can our practice lay a foundation of ignorance and prophaneness, or how can we be said to confound the Church and the world? Can teaching Conversion be a foundation for ignorance and prophaneness? Or can the rejecting of unbelievers confound the Church and the World?

But to have done, let all men judge whether the practice we have pleaded for can be justly charged

charged with such mischiefs, absurdities, and contradictions as *our Author* hath been pleased to load it with? Or whether himself be not much more to be charged with absurdities and contradictions, and at last this mischief, that he hath unjustly reproached the good ways of God?

Sixthly, *Our Author* endeavours to disprove the practice of Infant-baptism by the supposed nullity and utter insignificancy of it. It is faith he, no ways safe for any to rest contented with that Baptism they received in their infancy, because such their Baptism is a meer nullity and insignificant nothing in respect of the New Testament ordinance of Baptism. And this he endeavours to make out by this reason in the general, viz. because, saith he, there is that wanting in it which is so essential to true Baptism: And he instanceth in a two fold supposed defect in Infant-baptism.

First, There is, saith he, the right subject of Baptism wanting.

Secondly, The true external form is also wanting, as it is practised vwith us

*Ansiv.* That Infants are the true and proper subjects of Baptism, hath been I hope sufficiently proved, and therefore I shall pass that, and only briefly enquire, whether to administer Baptism by sprinkling or pouring water upon the face, be such a defective manner of administration, as that it renders it a meer nullity, and insignificant nothing: So as that none may safely rest contented in their Baptism as so administered to them. Now for this I shall only offer these few things to consideration, which I desire may be duly weighed.

First,

First, That the way or manner of administering Baptism is not clearly and plainly determined in the Scriptures, neither the signification of the word, nor any of the instances left upon record of persons baptized will determine it. This is so fully demonstrated by others, in particular Mr. Wills, that I shall add no more for the evidencing of it. And therefore

Secondly, That as there is but a probability that Baptism was at any time administered by immersion or dipping, so there is a probability (to say no more) that sometimes it was administered by pouring or casting water with the hand upon the face of the party baptized. Thus when so great numbers were baptized together, and persons were baptized in their houses at midnight.

Thirdly, Let it be considered, that Baptism administered by pouring water upon the face, doth answer and perform the uses and ends of Baptism, as well as it doth when administered by immersion dipping or plunging. For the making out of this I shall not need to instance in all the ends and uses of Baptism, I shall take only these four,

1. The first is to represent to, and as it were set before the eyes of the mind the good contained in and conveyed by the Covenant of Grace. And hence Baptism is usually call'd a significant sign.

2. The use and end of Baptism is to seal, and confirm unto the soul its own interest in and enjoyment of that good, according to the true terms and tenour of the Covenant. And hence it is called a sealing or confirming sign.

3. The use and end of Baptism is so far to represent and hold forth the ways and means through

through which the soul comes to have an interest in and enjoy that good, as may through the concurring light of the word and assistance of the spirit raise the mind up unto due apprehensions of, and advantage it, in the acting of its faith in and upon them, and enjoy the comfort of the good vouchsafed by and through them: These means are two fold according to a twofold kind of good contained in and conveyed by the Covenant of Grace.

The first of which is wholly extrinsecal to the soul, as the washing away the guilt of sin.

The second is intrinsecal as washing away the filth of sin, and the raising of the soul from a state of death to a state of life. The first is Christ, as having born the curse of the law, and thereby satisfying the justice and law of God in his sufferings, death, and burial, and deliverance therefrom in his resurrection and exaltation.

Secondly, The spirit, as given to or poured out upon the soul, or shed abroad (as the Apostle elsewhere speaks) in the heart. But:

Fourthly, The use and end of Baptism is to represent and oblige the soul to its duty required unto or upon its reception and enjoyment of the fore-mentioned good: And this duty in the general is to die unto sin, and live unto God. And Baptism is appointed for, and doth perform these uses and ends from a certain analogy and proportion that it bears as to the good contained in and conveyed by the Covenant of Grace, and the means through which that good is vouchsafed: So to the duty required unto or upon the souls reception of the good through those means. Now

Secondly,

Secondly, I say that Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, doth answer and may perform all these uses and ends as well, and as effectually as it would do if administered by plunging of the whole body into water.

For the clearing up of this I shall offer these two things.

First, That Baptism, as administered the one or the other way, doth not bear a full and adequate Analogy and proportion to all those things unto which in the performance of its ends and uses it hath reference. As for instance take Baptism as administered by immersion, it bears not a full and adequate Analogy or proportion to all the things it hath reference unto; this is evident, to instance in two things amongst others.

First, It doth not fully and adequately represent the means through which the soul comes to be washed and cleansed from the guilt of sin, the chief and principal means is the death of Christ or the shedding of his blood: Hence we are said to be *reconciled by the death of Christ, Rom. 5. to be washed in his blood, Revel. 1.* Now Baptism as administered by immersion, represents only his burial and resurrection, but not his death or pouring out of his blood.

Secondly, It doth not, as so administered, at all represent the means whereby the soul is washed from the filth of sin, that is the pouring of the spirit upon, or shedding him abroad into the heart of the party baptized. So that supposing (as we deny not) that baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, doth not bear an exact and adequate proportion or analogy to all the

things, in the performance of its uses and ends, it hath reference to, no more doth it as administered by immersion.

Secondly, That Baptism, as administered by pouring water upon the face, as it doth bear such an analogy and proportion to all the things it hath reference to, as that it may through the concurring light of the word, and assistance of the spirit perform all its uses and ends as effectually as if administered by immersion, so it doth bear a more full and exact proportion to some of them, than it doth as administered the other way. This consists of two branches.

First, That Baptism, as administered by pouring water upon the face, doth bear such an analogy and proportion to all the things it hath reference unto, as that, as so administered, it may through the concurring light of the word, and assistance of the spirit, sufficiently perform all its uses and ends to the party baptized. That I may not enlarge, I shall only give two instances, about which the greatest doubt must rationally arise.

First, Baptism, as thus administered, so far represents Christ as dead, buried, and risen again, as the means through which the soul comes to enjoy all the good contained in and conveyed by the Covenant of Grace, as may raise up the mind unto him, and help the soul to act its faith upon him for that good. This will appear by these two observations.

First, That the death of Christ, the main and principal means through which the soul comes to enjoy all the good of the Covenant, is in Scripture express by his pouring out his soul unto death.

Isai.

*Isai. 53. 12.* So all the sufferings of Christ are express by this phrase, *I am poured out like water,* *Psal. 22 14.* So the death and sufferings of Christ are represented by pouring out the wine in the Lords Supper. And hence the mind being guided by the light of these Scriptures, and assisted by the spirit, may raise it self up unto due apprehensions of, and may duly act its faith upon Christ, as dead, buried, and risen again, by the sight of water poured upon the face, as well as by the sight of the parties baptized immersion or plunging into the water.

Secondly, That the burial, and resurrection of Christ are in some measure figured and represented by Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, as well (suppose it be not so clearly) as by Baptism administered by immersion. Theres the pouring water upon the person representing the covering of the dead body with earth, which we know is by casting and as it were by pouring earth or dust upon it, and then there is the freeing the body from the water poured upon it, or the party baptized raising himself up from under the water, somewhat representing the raising of the dead body from under the earth thrown or cast upon it in the grave: So that Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, doth so far represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as may through the means aforementioned perform its uses and ends with reference to the party Baptized.

Secondly, The other instance I would give, is in Baptisms representing and engaging the soul to its duty, viz, to die to sin, and live to God in

the due exercise of Grace, and practice of holiness; And thus Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, may as effectually represent and engage to that duty, as though administered by immersion or plunging. This is evident from what hath been already said, for look how far Baptism as administered the one or the other way, doth represent to the mind the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, so far it doth represent and oblige the soul to endeavour after a conformity to him, in dying unto sin, and arising up to newness of life. Thus from the Analogy and proportion that Baptism bears to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the Apostle infers, an obligation put upon all that are baptized, by that their Baptism to die unto sin, and live unto God. Now Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, as it doth more fully represent the death of Christ, than as administered by immersion, so it doth though somewhat more obscurely yet also so far represent his burial and resurrection, as may effectually represent to the mind, and oblige the soul to its duty.

Secondly, For the other branch of the second particular, namely that Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, doth bear a more full and exact Analogy and proportion to some of the things it hath reference unto than it doth as administered by immersion. Let us instance in that one great end and use of Baptism, viz. to represent to the mind and thereby raise it up to due apprehensions of, and acting its faith upon the great means whereby the soul comes to be washed from the filth of sin, and raised up from a state of

death

death to a state of life. This means is (as I have said) the spirit as poured out upon the soul. Now the pouring out of the spirit is more fully and plainly represented by Baptism as administered by pouring water upon the face, than as administered by plunging : This carries its own evidence along with it : From the whole of what hath been said we may evidently see, that no certain argument can be drawn from the nature, uses, and ends of Baptism, to evince the way and manner of its administration to be by immersion, inasmuch as being administered by pouring water upon the face, it doth answer and may perform all its uses and ends as really and effectually, as though administered by immersion. But let that suffice for the third consideration.

Fourthly, That which I would further offer to Consideration, is the practice of, at least vastly, the major part of the universal Church and people of God not only for the present, but for several hundred years by past. Thus the way and manner of the administration of Baptism hath been and is by Sprinkling or pouring water upon the face: And here we may consider the qualifications of the persons so practising of it. They have been men as of the greatest parts and abilities, able to search into, weigh, and determine aright about the mode or manner of practices, as well as about the practices themselves, so men of the greatest sincerity acquaintance, and (as I may say) familiarity with God. Now in doubtful cases the practice of the Church of Christ ought to have its due regard : *Aut Dei testimonio aliquid esse confirmandum aut eorum qui Dei amici fuerunt,* faith Plato in Timaeo.

And

And surely when we have the testimony of so many friends of God, we ought not rashly to change our practice: The Apostle takes it for granted that the custom of the Churches of God will by sincere saints be duly attended to, and therefore either to suppress that unbecoming custom among the *Corinthians*, of womens praying and prophesying unvailed, or to put an end to all those contentions that might arise or be continued about that practice, he tells them *they had no such custom, nor the Churches of God, 1 Cor. 11 16.* That of *Austin* cited by *Pareus*, being duly bounded and rightly applyed, hath its weight in it, *In quibus scriptura nihil certè definit, mos populi Dei, atque instituta majorum pro lege habenda sunt.* But

Fifthly, Let the blessing that Baptism, as so administered, hath been attended with to many thousands, as also how acceptable to God and comfortable to themselves they have walked through and finisht their pilgrimages here upon earth, as only baptized that way in use among us: be seriously weighed: Of how many thousands who have only been baptized by sprinkling or pouring water up on their faces, may it be said as the Apostle faith of *Enoch, they had this testimony that they pleased God,* and have enjoyed the full benefit and blessing of that practice. Now when God hath evidently attended an ordinance as administered after this or that manner with a blessing and that from one age to another and manifested by variety of ways, his acceptance of such who have continued under it as so administered, we ought not rashly and without good warrant from Scripture to attempt an alteration in such a manner of administration. But

Sixthly,

Sixthly, Let it be yet considered, what hazard the administration of Baptism by immersion or plunging exposeth the administrator as well as the parties to whom it is administred, to fall under the breach of some Moral precepts, in special the sixth and seventh. It is true, were it plainly determin'd in Scripture, that baptism should be administred that way, we might expect preservation from those evils, but when the manner of administration is left absolutely undetermin'd in scripture, and consequently it is purely an indifferent thing, whether administred the one or the other way, how such preservation can be groundedly expected, concerns those, who insist so much upon that way of administration, to consider : I might yet add the incapability of many thousands who are the proper subjects of Baptism, and ought to be baptized, to receive it that way. I mean it of grown persons as well as Infants : Thus all that are converted upon dying beds and the like, now it seems wholly improbable that our Lord Christ should make that manner of administration indispensably necessary, which would remediflesly deprive many thousands of the ordinance it self. But to come to a close by what hath been said we may see, whether there be so much as a probability that the administring of baptism by pouring water upon the face, which is the way I especially approve of, yea or by sprinkling doth render the ordinance a meer nullity and insignificant thing, and whether believers may not rest contented in their baptism so administred to them. Yet this let me add, let every one be fully perswaded in their own minds, only remembiring that the manner of the administration of Baptism concerns not at all the subjects of it.

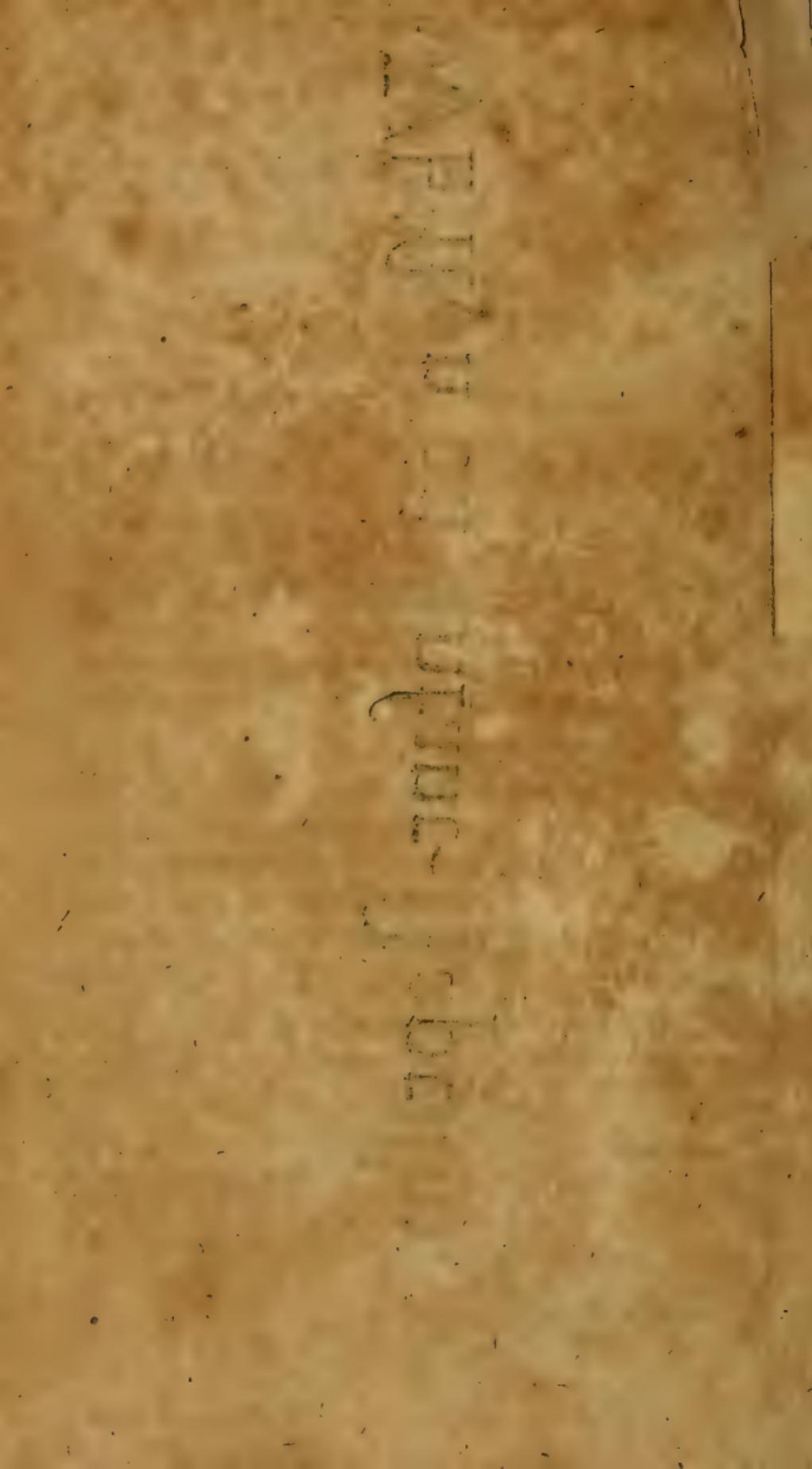
Lastly,

Lastly, Our Author attempts to disprove Infant-baptism by the eminent witness that hath been (as he saith) born against it from first to last.

*Answ.* What heed is to be given either to Mr. Danvers in producing, or to the testimonies of his witnesses produced by him, hath been afore considered. I need add no more, only let me say, it cannot be judged an unequal or irrational request, if I desire both him and all others of his persuasion, that they will give a like attendance and credit to the Authors cited by himself, in what they say in favour of Infant-baptism, as they will give them or any others in what they are conceived to speak against it. Now both *Austin* and *Chrysostom* (whose testimony our Author allows) positively assure us, that in their days Infant-baptism was the universal practice of the whole Church, and the one of them, that it had been so from the Apostles days thitherto. So *Bellarmino* (whose testimony he ought not to reject seeing it is produced by himself) saith, that *Infant-baptism is written in the books of almost all the Ancients.* The vanity of what he saith of its being an Apostolical tradition not written, because it is not written in any Apostolical book, appears from what hath been already said, that it is written in the books of almost all the Ancients, is that our Author and others of his persuasion are at present desir'd to attend to. And let me add that as it is written in the books of almost all the Ancients, so ne *ipsi quidem* not the least word or syllable is written in any of the books of any of the Ancients in a direct opposition against it, either as disallowed by the scriptures, or introduced into the Church by men. Now would but men give attendance to, & receive that three-fold testimony with that observation added thereunto, I doubt not but they will be convinced that as Infant-baptism wants not sufficient testimony from men, so it is their chief wisdom and answerably will have their minds somewhat the more disposed to attend unto and embrace the testimony it hath from God, where he in express words saith, *I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee.*

F N I S.

Whiston on Infant-Baptism.



A N

# E S S A Y

To Revive the  
Primitive Doctrine  
and Practice of  
**INFANT-BAPTISM**  
In the Resolution of four  
**Q U E S T I O N S.**

- I. What are the Reasons of God's appointing the Token of the Covenant to be applyed to the Infant-seed of his People?
- II. What is the Good or Benefit they receive thereby?
- III. What is the duty of Parents towards their Children as bearing the Token of the Covenant?
- IV. What is the Improvement that Children, as grown up to years of Maturity, may and ought to make of the Token, as applyed to them in their Infancy.

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By Joseph Whiston, Minister of the Gospel.

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*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased,*  
Daniel 12. 4.

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*Nil erubescit veritas nisi abscondi, Tertul.*

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LONDON, Printed for Jonathan Robinson, at the Golden-Lion in St. Pauls Church-Yard. 1676.



TO THE

# Judicious Reader.



The Subject matters treated of in these Essays are confessedly weighty and important: somethings in them, it must be acknowledged to many, if not to most in this age will seem new, and at least, before a through weighing of the whole, and diligent collation of one thing with another, somewhat strange; and no wonder, seeing none of late have professedly handled the two former questions (wherein what is dubious and subject to censure will especially be found) here discussed. Whence I cannot but expect that some, possibly not a few, so soon as they understand how high I have carried the privileges of the seed of Believers, and how great a good I have assigned to them; and that universally will reject the whole as novel, unsound and erroneous, though upon no other account than the different apprehensions themselves have hitherto had together with a prejudiciale perswasion of the impossibility of yeelding so much to the Seed of Believers, and that universally, and yet maintaining those great doctrines of Election, &c. So long contended for by the generality of Protestants. To such I have little to say, save only to assure them that I hold, and am ready, according to that small Talent I have re-

# To the Judicious Reader.

ceived, to contend with them for those Doctrines, as to the Sum and Substance of them, that they are justly jealous of having any breach made upon, and had I apprehended any inconsistency between what is here offered and those Doctrines, these Papers had never seen the Light : But as for others, who by humility, sense of imperfections, and consciousness to themselves of not having made so thorow an inquiry into these matters as may be made, are kept apprehensive of a possibility of receiving an addition to that light they have received about them; I hope I may without offence humbly recommend these Essays to their serious perusal, not desiring a sudden compliance from any ; that a through-search be made into what is here offered, and things duly compared the one with the other, is all that I expect. That some Essays of this nature should be made seems necessary, it being sufficiently known by all how great a let to the embracement and comfortable walking in the practice of Infant Baptism the want of a satisfactory resolution of these questions hath been and still is. What more frequent in the mouths of the unwary rejectors of that practice than such questions as these ? For what reason can it be imagined, that God should appoint such a solemn and weighty Ordinance as that of Baptism is, to be applyed to Ignorant Babes, who can make no use or improvement of it ? or what good have they by it ? or if we will assign any good to them that is worth contending for, how can we maintain those doctrines of Election and special Grace, &c. we so zealously assert ? The removal of which stumbling-blocks seems necessary, and is here designed. That the Infant-Seed of believing Parents are interested in the Covenant of Grace, or are confederates with their Parents, and have a right to the token of the Covenant, which now is Baptism, are here taken for granted.

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granted, and lie as the Foundation to the ensuing discourse : and indeed both these now appear with so much clearness of evidence, and meet with such feeble opposition from Men contrary-minded, that I cannot see how any can rationally expect the further establishment of either, but may justly expect we should build upon those Foundations laid. And to nothing can the steadfastness of the generality of judicious Christians, whether learned or unlearned, in their Judgments and Practices respective to the Covenant-Interest and Baptism of the Infants we speak of, be so properly, and according to any principles of Christianity, attributed on this side the watchfull eye of the great Shepherd of the Flock, as to the clearness of that evidence, especially considering how little inquiry hath been made into, and how little satisfaction hath been given about the question here debated. Neither ought nor rationally can any different apprehensions discernable about the resolution of these questions, wherein the structure to be raised doth consist, be interpreted as a weakening to the Foundation laid, though such an evil construction is put upon them by some. For my self, however I may be apprehended, by such especially that stand aloof off, and view my work at a distance, to have built but Hay and Stubble ; yet upon a through scrutiny and just trial I cannot but hope, yea, and am greatly perswaded, it will be found what will abide the Fire. Indeed in my search after the good, benefits, and advantages accruing to the Seed of Believers by their Covenant-Interest and Baptism, I have walked in a Path much unfrequented of latter years by the Foot of Man, and have seen many dangerous Rocks and Precipices both on my right hand and on my left, and that not at a great distance only, but very near, which how to avoid I must say hath cost me some serious

# To the Judicious Reader.

thoughts : besides my way hath been not a little obscured and obstructed, by the various cross traversings to and fro both by Friends and Foes. Yet I hope through the good hand of God upon me, and that light he hath afforded me, my way is safe ; Yet this I shall freely acknowledg, 'tis not only possible, but very probable that such as shall adventure into this search, will discern my steps have not been so even, but that they will see it necessary sometimes to tread out of the very Steps that I have taken : yet this I am much perswaded of, that as they will find the Good, Benefits and Priviledges assigned by me to the Seed of Believers, do indeed appertain unto them ; So they must walk at least very nigh the Path I have gone in. Yet I shall not be positive and peremptory, that the Infant Seed of Believers can have no interest in the Covenant, nor right to Baptism, unless they are granted to have all that good, and all those benefits and Priviledges that I have assigned to them ; much less will I say that no other mediums can be found out to evince the necessary redundancy of all that good, and all those Benefits and Priviledges from their Covenant-state and Baptism, than what I have made use of ; only this I must say, I cannot at present see how we can maintain the former, and not grant the latter. 'Tis true, the good, Benefits and Advantages I have assigned them are great and glorious ; but the serious consideration that it is a Covenant of Grace that is extended to them, and taking due measures of the unsearchable Riches of the Grace of God, the shewing forth and illustration of which is designed by his entring Covenant with Man, will be of no small use unto any that shall pursue the enquiry I have entered upon. 'Tis certain, 'tis a most glorious expression of the Grace of God, that he should extend his Covenant to the seed of his People with themselves, and grant so

# To the Judicious Reader.

much good to them thereby, Yea I think it may be said, tis one of the most glorious expressions God hath made of his Grace to Men, next to that unspeakable Gift the Son of his Love. But seeing 'tis a Covenant of Grace, and God the Author of it is so unsearchably rich in Grace, why should the Glory of it obstruct our belief? Why should it seem incredible, that God should extend his Covenant to Infants, and grant them all that good that hath been assigned freely, though themselves are utterly incapable of performing any duty antecedently as the condition, or consequently immediately by way of gratitude, when where he doth impose a condition as in respect of the adult, yet himself gives it, - and whose fruit of gratitude he receives, is found (as the Prophet Hosea speaks) in himself? It's true some of our opposers, to the prejudicing of their own minds, and for the laying stumbling-blocks in the way of others, have pretended that we hold the same conditions are incumbent upon Infants even in their Infant-state, that are incumbent upon the Adult, only that Parents are taken as proxies to perform the condition in the room and stead of their Children. A great mistake. We say the Covenant is wholly free to Children during their pure Infant-state, and that no condition at all is incumbent upon them, only that they be the Seed of Believers. Hence, when we speak of the condition of Childrens Covenant-Interest, we mean no more, but that it is necessary that they be the Seed of Believers, the promises being to Abraham's Seed (and such confessedly true Believers are,) in their Generations. And why the greatness and glory of that Good, and those Privileges and Benefits assigned to them, should stumble any, I can see no just reason, if it be considered that it is the Covenant of Grace that is extended to them, and due measures of the Grace

# To the Judicious Reader.

Grace of God be taken, and both considered in conjunction with his design in establishing his Covenant with, and granting all the Grace and Blessings of it unto Men. Though truth, as its Author neither needs, nor is much advantaged as to its entertainment by those, whose care it is to receive the Law from the mouth of the Supreme Law-giver by the testimony of Men; yet when any Man hath a Call to expose to publick view, what he conceives to be so, which carries an appearance of dissimilitude from the known sentiments of the generality of Orthodox Divines contemporary with him, to evidence the correspondency thereof with the Principles and Judgments of former Divines, of equal repute for Orthodoxy and Soundness in the Faith, may be useful, both as a means to secure himself from the censure of singularity, and what he exposeth to view from rejection, before a through-enquiry be made into it. As for what I have asserted, I am willing it should undergo the most severe Scrutiny by all unbiassed and judicious lovers of Truth, and answerably that it should be rejected, or embraced, according to the Evidence it carries along with it. Neither shall I make much search after the Judgment either of ancient or modern Divines; neither have I, as the Case at present stands with me, a convenient opportunity to do it: Yet this may be said in the general, 'tis well known to all that have any considerable acquaintance with their Writings, that the generality, if not the universality of the Fathers living in the first Ages, did grant, yea assert the full of what I have done, and, as most think, somewhat more; but therein I doubt not but they will be acknowledged by those I have now a special respect unto to have exceeded the bounds of Truth, and consequently that what they have allowed be-

# To the Judicious Reader.

beyond what I have asserted, must be reckoned inter  
nævos. That wherein (it is true) they have declared  
their Judgments most clearly and fully in and about,  
is those two Benefits I have assigned to the infant-Seed  
of Believers, viz. Their discharge from the guilt and  
condemning power of Original sin, and a right to fu-  
ture Salvation, and consequently their infallible enjoy-  
ment of it, in case of their death in their pure Infant-  
states. But they that have granted them these two  
Benefits, cannot be rationally supposed to deny the  
third, viz. Their interest and propriety in God, seeing  
pardon of sin and propriety in God are inseparable.  
And yet that they did universally assert the necessity of  
their personal Faith, and closure in with the Covenant,  
when come to years of maturity, is undoubted. So that,  
I conceive, it will be readily granted, that the Judg-  
ment of the generality, if not the universality of the  
Primitive Fathers, lies on my side; and that wherein  
I dissent from them, they themselves dissented from the  
Truth. Indeed it must not be denied that at least too  
many seem to, possibly some really did, ascribe these  
things too abstractedly to Baptism, not having that re-  
gard to the Covenant that they ought to have had; but  
that all, yea, or the major part, especially in the purer  
Ages of the Church, did so, is not only more then can  
be proved, but the contrary may be rationally conclu-  
ded from variety of passages scattered up and down  
in their Writings. As for our modern Divines, espe-  
cially those of the present Age, I shall readily grant  
they have been, and still are, as to the major part of  
them otherwise minded. Their mistakes I humbly con-  
ceive need rectifying in order to a thorough establishment  
of the minds of Men in the practice I in common with  
them plead for; and therefore their bare testimonies  
ought

# To the Judicious Reader.

ought not to be improved against me. Yet I am not wholly singular; some in this present age, and more in the ages last foregoing, have sufficiently declared their Judgments in a high if not exact correspondency to what I have affirmed. The 17 Article of the Synod of Dort, in their first head of Doctrine, viz. Predestination, come up fully to part of what I have affirmed, and therefore I think meet to transcribe it. It is this, *Quandoquidem de veritate Dei ex verbo ipsius nobis est judicandum, quod testatur liberos fidelium esse Sanctos, non quidem naturâ, sed beneficio sœderis gratuit, in quo illi cum parentibus comprehenduntur pri parentes de Electione & salute suorum liberorum, quos Deus in infantiâ ex hâc vitâ evocat, dubitare non debent.* Which seems necessarily to require, as might easily be made out, considering their judgments in all those five controverted points, that they should hold the full of what I do. And as these worthy Divines expressly declare their Judgments to be for the Election and infallible Salvation of all the Infant-Seed of Believers dying in their Infancy; So I shall quote one famous in his day (to let pass particular Divines of that Synod) exactly concurring with what I have said concerning the discharge of all Infants we now speak of from the guilt of Original Sin; that is famous Ursin; His words are these. *Peccatum Originale in Baptismo formale tollitur, sed materiale manet;* that is, as himself expounds, tollitur quoad reatum, manet quoad pravitatem. Some others of the same mind with me as to the main Good, Benefits and Priviledges assigned to the seed of Believers might be mentioned, and a further search into the Judgment of Authors concerning that way I have proceeded in, to secure myself from those Rocks bordering upon it, was intended; but an unexpected Pro-

vidential

# To the Judicious Reader.

vidential removal of me from my study, when I was about to put the last hand to the ensuing sheets, prevented, by means whereof the Book appears more naked than otherwise it might have done. But to hasten. The Reader may take notice, that the first draught of the solution here given of the two first questions was drawn up about four or five years since; but I was not without some hopes that some abler Pen might have performed this Work, and when I saw a call to it, I was willing rather to go gradatim than run, that I might tread more securely. Upon both which accounts, with some others, my first promise hath been so long unperformed, and now at last it being performed, I must say two things greatly check my expectations as to the desired effects of this my undertaking.

The first is the cursory reading and overly perusal of Books by the generality of Readers. How few shall we find that will be at the paines, or allow themselves sufficient time thoroughly to weigh and well digest what they read, and with the noble Bereans search the Scriptures daily, whether the things they read be so? How do most cursorily read Books coming to their bands? and if any thing appear to correspond with their precedent sentiments, they readily embrace that or if any thing disagree therefrom, they as suddenly reject without a due weighing of what is written, and comparing one thing with another: But alas! Divine Truths especially that lie more towards the bottom of those Golden Mines contained in the Scriptures, or are obscured by the different sentiments and reasonings of Men, will not be found out or discerned in themselves, and distinguished from errors at so easy a rate.

The second is those gross neglects, that Parents are generally guilty of towards their Children. Oh the marders

# To the Judicious Reader.

ders even of their own Children that most Parents will be found guilty of ! I mean it not of their Bodies, but of their Souls. Causa Causæ est Causa Causati is a sure maxim. The Apostacy of Children is the cause of their Death, but the neglect of Parents is the great cause of their Apostacy. Parents will possibly catch at what makes for their comfort with reference to their Children, especially such of them as have been either carryed from the Womb to, or taken out of the Cradle, and laid asleep in the Grave; yet I much fear but few will be stirred up and effectually moved to a vigorous performance of their duty towards those whose lives are prolonged, and that arrive to that ripeness of age, that capacifies them for the performance of the conditions of the Covenant themselves. Let but Parents throughly study their Childrens Priviledges as Confederates with themselves, and faithfully apply themselves to the discharge of their duty towards them, and it will give good ground of hope that both he that hath sown, and they that reap, viz. both Parents and Children, shall have a time, or rather an Eternity to rejoice together.

Thine in the Service of Christ for thine  
own and thy Childrens Souls,

Jo. Whiston.

December 14.

1675.

The

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## The Principal Errata's.

P<sup>A</sup>ge 42. Line ult. for *in* read *on*. p. 64. l. 32. for *visible*  
*r. invisible.* p. 107. l. 5. for *senser.* *love.* p. 112. l. 10.  
for *assured r. offered.* p. 134. l. 5. for *not r. at.* p. 165.  
l. 11. for *it r. he.* p. 189. l. 4. for *or r. are.* p. 194. l. 25. for  
*for r. or.* p. 199. l. 29. after *be* add *the.*

## The Errata's of least Concernment.

Pag. 8. l. 1. for *ye r. yet.* p. 23. l. 16. for *is r. was.* p. 25.  
l. ult. for *four r. three.* p. 39. l. 12. blot out of. p. 111. l. 3.  
for *application r. explication.* p. 112. l. 16. for *usu r. esse.* p.  
131. l. 1. for *by r. has.*

## Errata's in the Contents of the Chapters.

Pag. 110. l. 2. after *Covenant* add *state.* p. 132. l. 6. after  
*all* add *that.* p. 162. l. 2. for *impossibility r. improbability.*

The Author having not seen the first and the three last  
sheets 'tis probable some faults are there escaped, which  
the Ingenuous Reader is desired to pardon, or amend.



## The Author hath two other *Treatises* Intituled,

I. *Infant-Baptism from Heaven and not of Men*, Or a Moderate Discourse concerning the Baptism of the Infant-seed of Believers. Whereunto is prefixed a large Introductory Preface, preparing the Readers way to a more profitable perusal of that Treatise.

II. *Infant-Baptism from Heaven and not of Men*, the second Part: Or, an Answer to Mr. Danvers's Treatise of *Baptism*. Wherein, as the vanity of his Authorities are, though briefly, yet sufficiently detected; so his Doctrinal Part is especially examined and confuted, and Infants Right to Baptism further confirmed.

Both sold by Jonathan Robinson at the  
Golden-Lion in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

# An Essay to revive the Primitive Doctrine of Infant-Baptism.

## CHAP. I.

*An Introduction to the whole ensuing Discourse.*

The four grand Enquiries proposed. The Reasons of Goa's ordaining the Application of the token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People, reduced to three heads : The first (viz.) those respecting God, entred upon, three Reasons respecting God assigned. First, his own Goodness, Grace, and Sovereign pleasure. 2. The Reference that the Application of the token of the Covenant hath to his Glory, the Ways how it refers thereunto, opened. 3. The reference it hath to the supportation and enlargement of the Kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ.

**T**HAT all Ordinances and Institutions that are indeed of Divine Original, have a direct reference to the glory of God, and are signal-ly expressive of his good will unto Men, is above all controversie among those that bear the name

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of Christians: yet wherein their reference, at least of some of them to that end, and of what use and advantage they are unto Men, and consequently what good will is expressed by them, is not discerned by many who have the truth of Grace. Hence it comes to pass sometimes, that some Ordinances whose claim to that Original is most just, yet are neglected by some, and utterly rejected by others, and that with the greatest fierceness of opposition, as judged of a quite contrary reference and signification. This (especially of later years) hath been the lot of that great Ordinance of Infant-Baptism; the main reason whereof seems to be the sad Corruption, or rather utter loss of the true Doctrine of the Covenant, especially of the Signs and Seals thereof, under that Antichristian darkness, that so long prevailed over the face of the Christian World. Neither is it to be thought strange, that a practice which is not apprehended to have any reference unto the glory of God, or the good and benefit of men, should be suspected as to its Original, and answerably rejected by Conscientious Christians. Hence the revival of the true Doctrine of the Covenant, and initiatory Seal, and Token hereof, at least so far as the seed of Believers are concerned in the one or the other, must needs have a great conducency to the establishing of the practice it self, as well as to the due improvement of it both by Parents and Children.

Some small essays of that nature are at present designed; only the Doctrine of the Covenant shall be no further lanched out into, than the resolution of four Inquiries relating to the Application of the Seal and Token thereof to Infants (the discussion of which hath been sometimes since promised) makes necessary.

necessary. The resolution of those Inquiries is the *τὸ επιγονοῦν* of the ensuing Discourse, whereby I am not without some hope, that at least, some little light may shine forth for the discovery of what reference this Ordinance hath to the glory of God, and how great a signification it carries, and signal expression it is of his good will to men. And as previous to a more clear procedure in what is intended, it must be remembred, that three things are at present presupposed, and taken for granted as being elsewhere proved.

1. That the Infant-seed of Believers are Joyn-Confederats with their Parents in the Covenant of Grace, or have a true and proper interest in the Covenant of Grace.

2. That as Circumcision of old was, so Baptism now is the outward Sign or Token of that Covenant.

3. That Infants as being within the Covenant, and under the promise of it, ought to have the outward Sign or Token applyed unto them.

These things being already proved, I shall immediately come to the discussion of the aforesaid enquiries, which are.

1. What are the reasons of Gods appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People.

2. What are the Benefits and Advantages arising and accruing to them thereby.

3. What is the duty of Parents towards their Children as bearing the Token of the Covenant.

4. What is the Improvement that Children themselves, may and ought to make of the Token of the Covenant applyed to them in their Infancy, as they grow up to years of Maturity. To begin with

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i. The first, *viz.* Why God hath appointed, or what are the reasons of his appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-Seed of his People?

*Answ.* That all the Laws and Ordinances of Divine Institution, yea even those, of which no other reason can be assigned by us but the sole will of the Legislator, are most rational, as agreeing with the highest and most perfect Principles of true Reason, is abundantly secured by their alone Relation to him as his, who is the only wise God. Nothing irrational can be the effect of Infinit Wisdom. Hence, are we assured that any practice is of Divine Institution, we ought, and so far as our hearts by renewing Grace are brought to their due obedience and allegiance unto God, we shall readily comply with them, as acquiescing in their rationality as commanded by him, who is *wise in Heart, as well as mighty in Power or Authority.* And hence it must needs be our Wisdom, as well as our Duty to bend our inquiries more after the will of God, constituting what shall be our Duty, than the reasons of his constituting this or that to be so. Are we assured of his will, his Wisdom secures his willing nothing but what is most rational, or what there is sufficient reason he should command; and his will alone is a sufficient warrant for our obedience. But yet God having made Man a rational and intelligent Creature, and given him eyes to see withall, he deals not with him according to mere Sovereignty, but indulgeth him a liberty, or rather enjoyns it as a duty to enquire after, and satisfy himself about the rationality of his commands: only a twofold Proviso being attended unto.

i. That

I. That he keep himself within the bounds of Sobriety, and presume not to be wise above what is written. *Non sapit qui plus iusto sapit.*

Secondly, That in case the rationality of this or that command appear not, either as not revealed by God, or as above the reach of his shallow understanding to discern it, he yield to mere Sovereignty, and answerably resolve to obey, though he see no other reason, but only this that God hath commanded it. And for Christians still attending to these Provisoës, to search after, and acquaint themselves with the reasonableness of Divine Commands, or the reasons of God's commanding this or that as a duty, conduceth not a little, as to their cheerful and complacential walking in ways of Obedience; so to their pleasing and honouring God in and by that their obedience: For though it is true, Reason as darkned and corrupted in fallen man riseth up with a strong opposition against whatever is of God, the τὸ φεγγυμα τῆς σαρκός, as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 8. 7. The wisdom or reason of the flesh, that is carnal or corrupted wisdom or reason being enmity against God: yet reason sanctified and regulated by Supernatural light is highly serviceable unto men in matters of Religion, and greatly subserves their yielding unto God due honour and glory in and by Universal Obedience to all his Commands. The more of sanctified reason any man hath, the more clearly ( supposing his due use and improvement of it ) will he discern the rationality of Divine Commands, and consequently the more fully and freely will he own and ascribe unto God the glory of his wisdom appearing in the commands, and chearfully submit to his Sovereignty as commanding, and answerably honour him by a complacential obedience,

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dience. Hence Christians of the highest reason, supposing them proportionably renewed and sanctified, will be most to the honour of God, and walk with the greatest delight and satisfaction to themselves in his wayes. To bring what hath been said to the instance before us; though the alone Revelations that God hath made in his Word of his Will, that the token of the Covenant should be applyed to the Infants seed of his People, ( did no reasons of that his Will appear ) would be sufficient warrant for our practice, and ought to oblige all men to a complyance therewith ; yet to make some inquiry into the rationality of that practice, or the reasons of Gods enjoyning of it, will be greatly useful as to the establishing the practice it self, so to Believers chearful walking therein, and honouring God thereby. The reasons then may be considered, either with respect unto God instituting, or the Parents, to whose Seed the Token is to be applyed, or the Seed to whom the Application is to be made.

i. For the reasons respecting God, and thus a threefold reason may be assigned.

i. His own Goodness, free Grace, and sovereign good pleasure. One special reason of all divine Institutions, yea of all that God hath done, or doth, whether as Legislator or Benefactor, with reference to the benefit of fallen man, must be resolved into his Goodness, free Grace, and sovereign Will and pleasure. *Thou art good* ( saith the Psalmist speaking unto God, *Psal. 119. 68.*) *and doest good.* God doth good, because he is good, *He worketh all things according to Council of his own Will,* saith the Apostle, *Eph. 1. 11.* As the mere goodness of God is the Fountain and original Spring of all the good he communicates to, or

or any way expresseth towards the children of men; so he worketh in the various communications and expressions thereof after the alone Counsel of his own Will. Hence as the vouchsafement of the Covenant with a Sign and Token, so the commands requiring the Application of this Token to Infants, as well as to the adult, must be ascribed both to his Grace and Goodness, and also to the pleasure of his Will. The Protomartyr *Stephen* enumerates the giving unto *Abraham* the Covenant of Circumcision

among the various expressions of the *Fædus Gratia*  
goodness and kindness of God to him, *quod obsignavit ei Circumcisio.*  
and his seed; for it was given to him *Piscator in loco.*  
not only for himself, but for his seed

also : *Act. 7. 8.* *He gave unto Abraham the Covenant of Circumcision,* the Covenant sealed and confirmed by Circumcision. For God to give to *Abraham* and his Seed the Covenant, was a glorious expression of his goodness to him and them; but to add an outward Sign for the confirmation of it was an aggravation of that his goodness. The confirmation of the Covenant by an outward Sign adds to the value of the Covenant it self, and is a higher expression of the goodness of God both to his people and their seed. Hence for Parents to accept of and apply the Covenant with the Sign and Token thereof only for and to themselves, but to refuse to do the like for or to their Seed, is to reject no small part of that goodness he designed for them, and had by the true tenor of the Covenant granted to them; which supposing it may not be interpreted such a despising of his goodness as the Apostle upbraids the Gentiles with, and by which, as he tells them in *Rom. 2. 4, 5.* *They treasred up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath,*

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and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: yet it comes so nigh to, and participates so much of it, as should make all tender Conscientious Christians greatly cautious of it. We see how much God was provokt by *Abaz* in refusing a Sign when offered for the confirmation of a particular promise. How much more provoking may it be, when Parents not only refuse the Sign of his Covenant, but his Covenant also though not for themselves yet for theirs? 'Tis above question to me, that it is less dangerous to err on the right hand, and would be vastly less displeasing unto God, for Parents to claim the Covenant for their Children, and apply the Token of it to them, upon a supposal of their interest therein, supposing the one not to extend, nor the other to appertain to them; than to reject and refuse the one and the other, supposing the one doth extend, and the other appertains to them. *Favores sunt ampliandi*, Favours are to be enlarged. 'Tis certainly more dangerous to narrow and straiten the favours of God to men, than to overamplify them in cases that are dark and doubtful, though here I conceive the case is not so, but I speak upon supposition that it were indeed so. The undervaluing or refusing any expression of the Grace and goodness of God unto men is greatly provoking to him. *Esau* to this day bears the brand of a profane person for parting at so low a rate with his birth-right, *Heb. 12. 16.* 'Tis dangerous either to have our eye evil because God is good to others, or to undervalue or reject any expression of his goodness to our selves, or ours, but that's by the way. Now I say it is from the goodness and free Grace of God, guided in the various expressions thereof by the alone Council of his own will, that he hath extended his

Covenant

Covenant with an outward Sign and Token annexed, either to Believers, or their Seed, so one special reason of the one and the other must be assigned thereunto.

But then secondly, The next reason respecting God is the reference and subserviency that the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of Believers hath to his own glory, he is greatly glorified thereby, and that several wayes.

1. His Goodness, Grace and Love in extending his Covenant unto them is made more manifest and conspicuous unto men. As in the administration of the Lords Supper, the death of Christ is openly shewn forth (*as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup ναταγγέλετε, ye openly declare, preach or shew forth the Lords death,* saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 26.) and consequently both the Grace and Love of the Father in sending his only begotten Son, and the Grace and Love of the Son in giving himself to be a Proprietary Sacrifice for the sins of men is publickly manifested, and made after a sort visible unto men. So by the Application of the Token of the Covenant, whether to the adult, or to Infants, the Covenant between God and them is publickly solemnized, and thereby his Goodness, Grace, and Love, in entring it with them respectively is openly declared, and made more conspicuous unto men. And consequently as God's extending his Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People is a further and higher expression of his Goodness and Love, than his entring it only with themselves; so by the Application of the Token to them there is a further manifestation of that his Goodness Grace and Love made unto them: and by how much the more clearly and openly any of the Attributes of God are manifested unto men, by so much

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much the more meet objects they become for their  
acknowledgments, admiration, and adoration ; and  
consequently such a manifestation of his Attributes  
hath a direct reference to his glory, and it is the duty  
of all men to yield him the glory of his Attributes by  
suitable acknowledgments , admiration, and adora-  
tion according to the manifestations he makes of them.  
*Oh ! Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done  
marvellous things : his right hand, and his holy arm  
hath gotten him the Victory. The Lord hath made  
known his Salvation : his Righteousness hath he openly  
shewn in the sight of the Heathen, saith the Psalmist,  
Psalms. 98. 1, 2.* The full explication of this Scrip-  
ture is not designed. That which alone concerns our  
present purpose is, the Psalmist's exciting men to sing  
*a new song unto the Lord,* upon this ground, or for  
this reason, that he hath made known his Salvation,  
*and openly shewed his Righteousness in the sight or be-*  
*fore the eyes of the Heathen ;* by making known his  
Salvation he hath openly shewn his Righteousness.  
The more visible God makes any of his Attributes  
unto men, be the way or means by which he doth it  
what they will, the more is he to be praised, admired,  
and adored by them : So Rev. 15. 3, 4. when God  
hath executed judgments upon Babylon, the blessed  
Assembly of Victors over the Beast are brought in as  
singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb,  
part of which is, *Who shall not fear thee O Lord and  
glorifie thy Name ?* as if he should say, surely every  
one would do it ; or oh how great is the stupidity  
of men that they do not do it ? And

*Accusant Mundi* what is the matter? why should men  
*stuporem, quod*  
*consideratione mirabilium Dei operum ad eum timendum &*  
*glorificandum non pernoventur.*

fear,

fear God and glorify his Name now rather, or more than formerly? They give the reason. *Thy Judgments*, and consequently thy Justice, Holiness, and Power in the execution of them are manifest. The more visible God makes his Attributes, the more he is to be glorified by men, and the more inexcusable is their stupidity in case of failure therein. Now I say by the Solemnization of the Covenant, as extended to, and entred with the Seed of Believers, by the Application of the Token thereof unto them, the Goodness, Grace, and Love of God is made more manifest, or is openly shewn in the sight, or before the eyes of men, and consequently hath a peculiar subserviency to his glory. And let it be farther observed, that as God's extending his Covenant to, and entring it with the Infant-seed of his People is an expression of greater Goodness, Grace, and Love, than the entring it with the Parents alone would have been; so there is somewhat in that his extending his Covenant to Infants for the Illustration and Manifestation of the riches, and freeness of his Goodness, Grace, and Love, beyond what there is in his entring it with Parents, or any adult persons whatsoever. But of that more hereafter.

2. Hereby the Sovereign Headship of our Lord Christ is publickly owned, and practically acknowledged by Parents, who in obedience to his revealed Will have the Token of the Covenant applied to their Seed, and that two ways.

1. By the solemn and visible dedication of theirs unto him, and entring them as Subjects of his Kingdom. The Apostle tells us that for this end Christ both died, and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. 4. 9. As the Father

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ther hath given him an Universal Headship over all  
Creatures; so he hath acquired the actual exercise  
thereof by his Death and Resurrection. Now as the  
adult by receiving the Token of the Covenant, and  
dedicating themselves thereby unto Christ as his Sub-  
jects and Servants do publickly own, and practically  
acknowledg his Headship over themselves; so by  
having the Token of the Covenant applyed unto  
theirs, and dedicating them unto Christ thereby,  
and entring them as joyn Subjects of his Kingdom,  
they alike own and acknowledg his Headship over  
theirs, and consequently openly own and acknow-  
ledge the Universal Headship of Christ. They have  
only an absolute power over, and right to dedicate  
themselves and theirs, who, as the Apostle speaks,  
*are οἱ ἀντῶν, theirs, or of them,* unto Christ and un-  
to God in him. And hence they go to the utmost  
bounds of that power and right that God in Nature,  
or his Word hath invested them with, in their endea-  
vours to promote, and propogate the Headship of  
Christ over all. Now thus publickly to own, and  
practically to acknowledg the Sovereign and Univer-  
sal Headship of Christ greatly redounds not only to  
the glory of Christ as Mediator, but to the glory of  
God the Father. *God hath highly exalted him, and*  
*given him a Name above every name, that every tongue*  
*should confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God*  
*the Father, Phil. 2. 9, 11.* And let me say, hath  
our Lord Christ deserved so ill at their hands, whom  
he hath redeemed with no less price than his own pre-  
cious Blood, that they should grudg him his Univer-  
sal Headship, or should refuse to dedicate them up to  
him, and enter them as Subjects of his Kingdom,  
whom

whom God and Nature hath invested with a power and right so to do.

2. By a solemn dedicating of their Infants unto Christ, and entring them as Subjects of his Kingdom, by a Right or Ceremony of his own Institution, they do visibly own, and practically acknowledg his Headship over his own House or Kingdom, as Lord and Law-giver thereof, which again greatly redounds as to his, so to his Father's glory. The Apostle inforceth his exhortation to Liberality to the Poor by this argument, *that they, viz. the poor would glorifie God for their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ,* 2 Cor. 9. 13. A practical profession of our subjection to the Gospel of Christ, or to the Laws and Ordinances of his Kingdom, redounds more to his and his Father's glory then a mere verbal profession doth. A verbal profession may be without the belief of the heart, but practice evidenceth a real belief of what is professed in words. And as by realizing our belief of his Sovereignty and Headship over his Church, we do our selves more immediatly honour and glorifie Christ; so others will be provokt and stirred up to glorifie God for that our professed subjection to his Gospel. And here let it be observed, that as in practice to submit to any Command and Ordinance of Christ is so far an owning and acknowledging of his Headship and Sovereignty: so by how much the more purely such a Command or Ordinance proceeds from his sovereign will and pleasure, by so much the more full and apparent is our owning and acknowledging of his absolute Sovereignty. Hence in as much as positive commands (and such is that concerning the Application of the Token of the Covenant) do more especially proceed from the sovereign will and pleasure

# 14 The Primitive Doctrine of sure of Christ, we by our professed subjection unto them do eminently own and acknowledg that his ab- solute sovereignty.

On which account it seems to be ( a thing not unworthy our observation, ) that all more especial probations, or trials of men have been made by some positive command. And yet further, some Laws and Ordinances of this kind ( at least *quoad nos*, ) proceed more purely and absolutely from the mere sovereign will and pleasure of Christ then others do. Some have the reason, yea (*consideratis considerandis*) necessity of their Institution engraven in legible Characters upon them, and men by a little use and exercise of their own reason may be convinced of the necessity of submitting to them, in order to their enjoying the good conveyed by them ; and answerably may submit rather out of self-love, then from a sense of the sovereignty of Christ ; whence their submitting to them is not so evident an acknowledgment of his Sovereignty. But now others, however alike rational, and necessary in themselves, yet their rationality and necessarietis lies more remote from ordinary observation, yea may possibly seem ( at least to many ) to be if not irrational, yet useless and unnecessary. Yea it must be further observed in respect of most, if not all Laws of this kind, ( viz. Positive Laws, ) though satisfactory reason of their institution may be assigned, yet somewhat of sovereign will and pleasure must be owned as the original ground of their institution. And this is necessary, that as men beholding their rationality, and seeing how they are adapted and suited to that end whereunto they are ordained, should admire the wisdom that appears in them ; so being *non-plust* in their enquiries after the full reason of them, should

should yield unto Christ the honour of his sovereignty by a ready submission to that, the full reason of the institution of which must be resolved into his Sovereign will and pleasure, who is the supreme Ruler in Jacob. An instance hereof we have in this Command, requiring the Application of the Token of the Covenant, especially as these particular rights, Circumcision of old and Baptism now was and is the Token, and Infants were, and are the Subjects to whom the one was, and the other is to be applyed ; for though a satisfactory account of these particular rights being appointed, and of the Application of the one and the other to Infants as Confederates with their Parents may be given, yet the command must be granted to carry no obscure impressions of absolute sovereignty ; After our utmost enquiries after the reasons either of such rights being instituted, or of their Application to Infants, we must leave somewhat to absolute Sovereignty. And answerably Parents by dedicating their Infant-seed unto Christ, and entring them as Subjects of his Kingdom, by such a particular Right or Ceremonie, as they openly own, and practically acknowledg his Headship over his own House in common with their subjection to any other of his Commands ; so in a special manner they own and acknowledg the absoluteness of that his Sovereign Headship, that his alone will and pleasure instamps such Authority on his Commands, as that on the sole account thereof all men ought to submit, and yield cheerful obedience unto them. By our cheerful and ready obedience to such commands, as we eminentlly evidence our own sincerity, so we both glorifie Christ as Mediator, and God the Father who hath put all power into his hand.

3. Hereby Parents give a publick commendatory Testimony to the Covenant of Grace, they openly testify their approbation and liking of it, they practically profess their high value of it, they declare their willingness that their Children should come under the bond of it, and that they should enjoy the good promised upon the terms required in it, and consequently that it is a great good, and advantage unto men to enjoy that good upon those terms. Now that is a great commendation to the Covenant, and doth redound to the glory of God establishing of it. As in case a man hath had a lease of a Manor or Farm during his life, and when he grows old, and comes to die, he is willing and desirous his son should have the lease renewed to him, and that upon the same terms and conditions himself had possessed it, he thereby gives a commendatory Testimony to his lease. So when a Believer shall put his Children under the bond of the Covenant, and do what in him lies to interest them in the good contained in it, and that upon the terms and conditions himself hath enjoyed that good, he thereby commends the Covenant, and openly declares its worthiness of all acceptation. It was no little commendation to the service of God, for *Joshua* to make that publick profession, that whatsoever choice the people should make as to the God they would serve, yet not himself only would, but *his house should serve the Lord*, Josh. 24, 15. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* He would not only continue in his service himself, but he would do what in him lay to oblige his Children to the service of the same God. Now this did greatly commend the service of God to the people, hence we see what an influence it had upon them, how resolutely

edly they express themselves : Then the people answered, and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. When people are not only resolvedly steadfast to the service of God themselves, but are willing and desirous that their Children should, and answerably use their utmost endeavours that they may ingage with them in the same Service, 'tis a high commendation to the Service of God. So when Parents shall enter their Children into, and bring them under the bond of that Covenant, which themselves have already taken hold of, it is a very great commendation to the Covenant ; they thereby publickly shew their approbation and value of it. Before I pass this, let me only say to those who do so zealously oppose their Childrens interest in the Covenant, and reject the Token, by the Application of which God hath ordained they should be brought under the bond of it , as the Lord said to his People of old, when they apostatized from him, *what iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me ? Jer. 2. 5.* So let me say, what iniquity have you found in God, that you should be so averse to your Childrens being brought nigh unto him ? What iniquity have you found in his Covenant, that you are so willing that the Entail of it to your Children should be cut off? Surely it may well discourage Sinners from taking hold of the Covenant, when you, that profess your selves to understand it, shall put so low a value upon it, and shall account Interest in it such an indifferent thing ; yea should seem to be so averse to yours having an interest in it. Is the Good promised so small ? or are the Terms required so hard and difficult, as that the Good is not worth having upon those Terms ? Alas ! that Professors should un-

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derstand the Covenant no better. I doubt not but many Parents, that now in their darkness reject, yea dispute against their Childrens interest in the Covenant, and deride their Baptism, would go through Fire and Water, as we say, that they might enjoy the one and the other , did they but fully understand of what benefit and advantage they would be unto them : But now through their misguided zeal they greatly reflect upon the Covenant, and consequently upon God the Author of it : whereas Parents by bringing their Children under the bond of it, by the Application of the Token to them do give a publick commendation of it, and thereby honour and glorify God as extending it to them.

4. Hereby Parents do publickly own, and practically acknowledg their belief of such things, which for men professedly to believe, own, and acknowledg doth greatly redound to the glory of God.

I shall only instance in such things as more especially are owned and acknowledged by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to Infants, Thus.

1. They publickly own and practically profess their belief of the Doctrine of Original sin, that there is indeed such a thing as Original sin communicated from *Adam* to all his posterity, and that by means thereof all men by Nature are Children of Wrath. As Circumcision of old, so Baptism now hath a special reference to Original sin, especially as Infants were and are the Subjects of the one and of the other. And the very Application of the one and the other to them doth presuppose them under the guilt of it ; and consequently Parents by having the Token of the Covenant applyed to their Infants do publickly own, and practically profess their belief, that though they have

have not, as the Apostle speaks Rom. 5. 14. *sinned ἐπὶ τὸ ὄμοιόματί, after or according to the similitude of Adam's transgression,* that is actually in the external violation of any precept of the Law, yet are subject to the curse of the Law and Wrath of God. Now for men publicly to own, and visibly to profess their belief of this Doctrine greatly redounds to the glory of God. Their guiltiness of that sin justifies him in all penal evils he lays upon them. What sad complaints have some Heathens made concerning Man's birth, and the variety of Miseries attending him, above what attend other Creatures, and thereby greatly reflected upon God his Creator, as though he had not been so good to Man, as to other Creatures, and this from their ignorance of the Doctrine of Original sin? They evidently perceived the sad fruits and effects of Original sin, but knew not Original sin as the cause of those effects. But now by owning and professing our belief of this Doctrine we do implicitly justifie God in all the miseries he hath subjected men unto, which must needs greatly redound to his honour and glory.

2. They do hereby publicly own, and practically profess their belief of the Doctrine of free Grace. It's sufficiently evident that Infants in their pure Infant-state are incapable of Merit, what God doth for them, he must needs do freely. Saith the Apostle, speaking of the difference that God put between Jacob and Esau in respect of Election and Preterition, and his consequent dealings with them respectively, *the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, viz. Rebekah, the elder shall serve*

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the younger, Rom. 9. 11, 12. That which I only design from these words is, to shew that what God doth for Infants, either in regard of Election before time, or actual Donation in time, he doth it not for or according to the Merit or desert of works, but freely of his own good pleasure; either merely of his Grace and good pleasure as in respect of Election, or of his mere Grace and good pleasure through the interposal of the mediation of Christ as in respect of actual Donation. If he should do what he doth for them of works, that is for, or according to the Merit or desert of works, it must be either the works of the Infants themselves, or the works of their Parents; not the works of Infants themselves, for they have neither done any good or evil; nor

Vigilantissime ait  
ex uno concubitu,  
gemini enim con-  
cepti erant, ne vel  
paternis meritis  
tribueretur. Si  
quisquam forte di-  
ceret, ideo talis  
natus est filius,  
qui à pater ita erat  
affectione illo tempo-  
re cum seruit in utero  
matris, aut era-  
rat ita mater af-  
fectione cum concepit,  
simil enim ambo  
sunt uno tempore  
concepti. Austin re-  
ferente Beda ex  
Epistola ad Simpl.

the works of their Parents, that appears from the difference he puts in his love and hatred, as the Apostle speaks between Children begotten, conceived, and born, not only from the same Parents, but at one and the same time, as in the case of Twins. If he deal with Children according to the deserts of Parents, he would deal alike with all Children that are so begotten, conceived, and born: So that what God doth for Infants cannot be of works, neither of Parents, nor Children, but must be wholly free, of his mere Grace and goodness through the Mediation of Christ.

3. Hereby they publickly own, and practically profess their faith in, and belief of the Truth, Faithfulness,

ness, and Power of God, his Truth and Faithfulness in his Word whether of threatening or promise, his Power as to accomplish his Word, so to bless and make effectual his own Institutions for that end whereunto they are appointed. Christ is the only refuge for fallen man to betake himself to for security from the wrath to come, and the way, whereby man betakes himself to this refuge, is by taking hold of the Covenant, and thereby getting under the promises of it made in Christ. Hence as by Baptism persons are visibly admitted into the Covenant, and that their admission is solemnized by coming unto Baptism, they are said *to flee from the wrath to come*, Mat. 3. 7. Saith John Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his Baptism, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* Baptism is a visible incorporation of Persons into Christ, and solemnization of their Covenant-relation with God in him, by means whereof they visibly come under the shadow of his wings, and under the promises made in him, whereby they are secured from the wrath to come: And Parents by taking hold of the Covenant for their Children, and solemnly dedicating them unto God in Christ, by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, bring them under the same refuge with themselves, they carry them along with them into this refuge from the wrath to come. Now as this proceeds from, so it is a visible and practical profession of their Faith, ( I mean in respect of such who do indeed act from true principles, as all believers are supposed to do, ) that they do believe the threatenings denouncing wrath against man as fallen and guilty of sin; so that the Promises made in Christ are true and faithful, as also that God is able to bless and make

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effectual his own Institutions to those ends and purposes they are appointed to in subserviency to mans freedom from that wrath. If Parents did not believe their Children were under the guilt of sin, and the threatenings declaring and denouncing Wrath against them, as under that guilt, why should they put them under the Wings of Christ by a solemn dedication of them to him for the securing them from Wrath? And if they did not believe Christ to be a sure Refuge, and that the Promises in him are true and faithful, to what purpose should they put them under his Wings, or carry them under the Covert of the Premises? And if they did not believe that the Application of the Token of the Covenant was appointed in some kind of subserviency to their freedom from Wrath, at least as growing up unto years of Maturity, and that God is able to bless and make effectual that Institution for the use and end he hath appointed it, why should they mind it, or take any care about it? Who will flee himself, or carry his Children to a Refuge, unless he apprehend some danger? who will make that a Refuge to himself or his, that he apprehends not safety in? who will take any course for the securing himself or his under any refuge, that he doth not apprehend will be effectual for that end? Hence I say Parents by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to their Seed do visibly and practically profess their Faith in, and Belief of the Truth, Faithfulness and Power of God. It is said of Moses, Heb. xi. 28. *Through Faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of Blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them;* believing the threatenings denounced against Egypt concerning the destruction of their first-born, and believing the promises made

made to themselves concerning their own freedom from that Plague, upon their sprinkling the blood of the Paschal Lamb upon the posts of their doors, he keeps the Passover, and sprinkleth, or takes care that the blood of the Paschal Lamb be sprinkled upon their door posts accordingly. And as he did this through Faith, so his doing it was a visible and practical profession of his Faith, *Pari fide & nobis circa Sacra menta est opus*, saith Pareus. As there is a need of the like Faith, so the like Faith is visibly and practically professed by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed of Believers, and this greatly redounds to the glory of God. This is mentioned as a peculiar discovery of the excellency of Moses his Faith, implying that much, or as our Lord Christ speaks, *a great Faith* is required unto, and discovered by his observation of that Institution. And let me say, did Parents act in the Application of the Token of the Covenant to their Infant-seed from so pure a Principle of Faith as they ought to do, and did they act their Faith as they ought with reference to the Token as applied to them, their Faith would be found to have a very excellency in it, they might be well renowned for the excellency of their Faith. Now at the greater rate of excellency Faith acts, the more is God honoured and glorified thereby, see Rom. 4.19, and 20. From what hath been said we may evidently see what a direct, yea how great a reference the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of Believers hath to the glory of God, and from that reference it hath to his glory it is in part that he requires it.

3. The third and last reason of this Institution respecting God may be its reference and subserviency

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to the supportation and inlargement of the Kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ. The supportation and inlargement of the Kingdom of our Lord Christ here in the World is greatly subserved hereby. Look for what end and purpose the Covenant was extended to

See Mr. Carter his  
*Abraham's Co-*  
venant opened.  
pag. 36. and so  
on.

the Seed both of *Abraham*, and of all his Spiritual Seed, with reference, and in subservency to the same ends and purposes is the Token of the Covenant to be applyed to them. Now one end of the extensiveness of the Co-

venant is the multiplication of the Seed of *Abraham* in order to the supportation and inlargement of the Kingdom of Christ, and answerably the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them hath a direct reference and subservency to that end. What reference and subservency it hath to that end will appear more hereafter. But let that suffice for the first Head of Reasons of God's appointing the Token of the Covenant to be applyed unto the Infant-seed of his People, *viz.* Such as respect God himself.

CHAP.

## C H A P. II.

The Reasons of God's ordaining the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People respecting the Parent from three Reasons now assigned. 1. The advantages arising therefrom to their Faith. How greatly their Faith is advantaged thereby shewed. 2. It is for the advantage of their Joy and Comfort in their Children. 3. It is that God may thereby lay greater Obligations upon them to endeavour the Conversion of their Children and their Personal Embracement of the Covenant as growing up to years of Maturity. The variety of Obligations lying upon Pædo-Baptists so to do above what Anti-Pædo-Baptists can apprehend themselves to ly under opened. How much greater ground of hope for success in their endeavours Pædo-Baptists have, than Anti-Pædo-Baptists according to their Principle can have, shewed. The third Head of Reasons, viz. Such as respect the Seed of Believers mentioned.

The second Head of Reasons, viz. Such as respect the Parents, to whose Seed the Token is to be applyed, and thus these four Reasons lie obvious.

i. First

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1. First it is for the advantage of their Faith to be acted with reference to their Seed ; by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to their Seed, they have a visible Ratification and Confirmation of the Covenant and Promises thereof, as extended and made to them. And that we may more fully discover what advantage the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed of Believers is to their Faith to be acted with reference to them, we may observe that the Promises of the Covenant respecting the Seed of Believers are considerable two wayes.

1. The Promises respecting the Seed of Believers are made to Parents with reference to, and on the behalf of their Seed.

2. They are made to the Seed themselves as descended from such Parents.

1. The Promises respecting the Seed of Believers are firstly and primarily made to their Parents, and are particular branches of the Covenant established with them. The Covenant consists in more Promises than one, or is comprehensive of several distinct Promises, some of which only concern Believers themselves, or contain some good to be enjoyed only by themselves in their own persons ; other respect theirs, though the Promises are firstly made to them, yet the good contained in them redounds to and is enjoyed by theirs. Thus when God promiseth to be a God to *Abraham's* Seed after him, the promise is first made to *Abraham* himself, though the good contained therein redound to, and is enjoyed by his Seed. And the same is true of the Promises as continued to Believers, they are firstly made to Parents. Saith God concerning *Abraham*, *I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep*,

the way of the Lord to do Judgment and Justice, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him, that is, that which he hath promised to him, Gen. 18. 19. Now what was it that God had spoken of or promised to *Abraham*? why not only that he would be a God to him as personally considered, but a God to his Seed or Household after him, and would give unto them the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting Possession. This twofold good of God's being a God to his Seed, and giving them the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting Possession, though enjoyed by his Seed, yet was firstly promised to him with reference to, and on their behalf. Children stand at so little a distance from Parents, that they are said to be the Parents themselves multiplyed. Parents do after a sort subsist in their Children, and answerably the good or evil of Children is accounted both in Scripture, and according to the dictates of Nature, the good or evil of their Parents. *Have mercy upon me*, saith the *Syrophenician*, when she came to Christ for cure for her afflicted Daughter, Matth. 15. 22. She accounts her Daughter's affliction her own, and the Daughter's cure would be the Mother's Mercy. Hence promises of good to, and threatenings of evil against Children are frequently firstly made to, or denounced against the Parents themselves as a good or evil unto them. So here the Promises of the Covenant respecting the Seed are particular and distinct branches of the Covenant as established with Believers themselves : But

2. These Promises may be considered as made to the Seed, they are not made only to their Parents, but also to their Seed with them, and hence Parents and Childaen are to be lookt upon as Joynt-Confederates

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rates with God. Hence saith the Lord to *Abraham*: *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations*, Gen. 17.7. The Covenant was established with *Abraham's Seed*, as well with *Abraham* himself, and Seed here includes his immediate Children as well as mediate; and hence again the Promise is said to be to the Children of Believers as well as to Believers themselves. *The Promise is to you and to your Children*, Acts 2. 39. And Children, as they grow up to years of maturity, may and ought to lay claim to the Promises as made to themselves as well as made to their Parents on their behalf. Now according to this twofold consideration of the Promises of the Covenant, there is a two-fold use and end of the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed of Believers.

i. Thereby that part of the Covenant entered with Parents respecting their Seed is ratified, sealed, and confirmed to the Parents. Hence in Gen. 17. 10. saith the Lord, *This is my Covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee, every Man-child among you shall be circumcised*. You, in the former part of the Verse intends both *Abraham* and his Seed as distinguished from his and their respective Natural Children. This is said to be the Covenant that they should keep between God and them, viz. that every Man-child among them should be circumcised. Hence it is evident that the Circumcision of their Male children was the Covenant to be kept by them. And how was the Circumcision of their Children said to be the Covenant between God and them, to be kept by them? why partly as that is in part the stipulation of the Covenant required on their part, and partly as it is the Ratification, and

Confirmation

Confirmation of the Covenant made with them, *viz.* that part of the Covenant respecting their Seed: so that Circumcision of their Male children was in part their duty, or a part of the restipulation to be performed by them, and also a confirmation of the Promises (*viz.* those respecting their Seed) made unto them. And what is here said of Circumcision, is true of Baptism, in as much as Circumcision is here spoken of as considered under that general notion, *viz.* the Token of the Covenant. And what is spoken of Circumcision as considered in that general notion is alike applicable to Baptism: It succeeds Circumcision in that notion, and there is a very great aptness and fitness in the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed, to seal and confirm unto Believers this part of the Covenant entred with them on the behalf, or with respect to their Seed, when God shall add to his Promises a Token to be applyed not only to Believers themselves, but to their Seed, that must needs have a very great aptness and fitness further to confirm and establish the Promises to them respecting their Seed. And a twofold reason may be assigned of Gods ratifying and confirming to Believers this part or branch of the Covenant respecting their Seed by the Application of the Sign or Token of the Covenant to them.

I. That the Sign or Token of the Covenant might be proportionable to the Covenant, of which it is the Sign or Token.

The Covenant entred with Believers consists (as I have said) in two branches. The first respects themselves; The second their Seed. Now the Sign or Token as applyed only to themselves, though it is true, it doth ratifie and confirm the whole Covenant, yet

yet it hath a peculiar respect to that branch respecting themselves. There is nothing in the Token as applied to themselves signifying their being blessings to their Seed, and consequently that branch of the Covenant would not have been confirmed, at least so expressly and clearly as was necessary for the help and advantage of their Faith, by the sole Application of the Token to themselves, because then the Token had not been fully proportionate to the Covenant. Hence that the Token might be proportionate to the Covenant, and answerably more fully advantageous to the Faith of Believers, God hath ordained the Application of it to the Seed as well as to the Parents themselves.

2. The great addition, that by these Promises of the Covenant respecting their Seed is made to the good of the Covenant, seems to make such a superadditional confirmation necessary. So great an addition is made to the good of the Covenant as entered with Parents by the extension of it to their Seed, that the Promises might have even *non-plust* their Faith, had not this superadditional confirmation been given. Wee see how *David* stands even amazed as not knowing what to say, when he not only reviews what God had already done for him, but considers the Promise further made to his House for so long a time to come, 2 Sam. 7. 18, 19. So for God not only to promise to be a God to Believers themselves, but to make their Children, and that as such, Fellow-heirs with them of the same Promise, might have even *non-plust* their Faith, had he not expressly ratified and confirmed that branch by the Application of the Token to their Seed. The glory of the Covenant might have overcome a weak Faith, had it not been suitably confirmed. But

2. The other end and use of the Application of the  
Token

Token of the Covenant to the Seed of Believers is the ratification and confirmation of the Promises as made unto them, and consequently for the more full securing of the good promised to them, and it ought to be so lookt upon, and improved by them as they grow up to years of Maturity, of which more hereafter.

Now then to bring what hath been said to our present purpose; we may see what advantage Believers have to their Faith, as to be acted with reference to their Seed, or the good promised to them, by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them; they have not only that part of the Covenant respecting their Seed ratified and confirmed to themselves, but they also see the Covenant as entred with, and the Promises as made to their Seed ratified and confirmed unto them: How far Faith is to be acted by Parents with reference to their Seed will appear, when we consider what Promises are made unto them, with the good contained in them, and consequently conveyed to and settled upon them by those Promises, But how far, or in what Sence soever Faith is to be acted, we see Believers have no little advantage for it. By the Application of the Token of the Covenant to their Seed they have not only the Promises as made to themselves with reference to their Seed confirmed to themselves, but those Promises as made to their Seed confirmed unto them.

2. Another reason may be, that God hereby might provide for, and lay a sure foundation unto the joy and comfort of his People in their Children, according to what Faith Believers can act with reference to their Children, and the advantage they have to that their Faith, so will their joy and comfort in them be, Children are great Blessings, choice Mercies, and peculiar

peculiar Comforts unto Men : We see how Jacob looks upon the gift of Children ; he accounts it a gracious Gift, when Esau seeing his Wives and Children puts the question, Who are these ? saith he, *They are the Children, that God hath graciously given me*, Gen. 32. 5. He accounts his children as an effect of great Grace and Mercy to him : So our Lord Christ tells us ; *a Woman when she is in travel bath sorrow, because her hour is come ; but when she is delivered of a Child, she remembers no more her anguish for joy that a Man is born into the World*, John 16. 21. The joy that a Man is born swallows up the remembrance of her sorrows : Children are Parents joys and comforts. But now were it so indeed that Infants ( I mean such as are born of believing Parents ) have no interest in the Covenant, nor any security thereby from the dreadful effects of their natural states and conditions, the apprehension and consideration of what their states and conditions are, must needs greatly allay, if not utterly destroy the joy and comfort of Parents in them : For Parents to see the fruit of their bodies is matter of joy, but when they reflect upon their Natural conditions, and remember they are Children of Wrath, this must needs greatly weaken, or rather utterly destroy that joy. And it is no little matter of admiration, how any, that know and believe the Scriptures declaring, how the whole race of Mankind are involved in the guilt of Adams sin as being virtually and seminally in him, as also how humane Nature is vitiated and corrupted with sin, and so propagated from Parents to Children, and consequently how all as born into the World are guilty before God, and children of Wrath : I say, how any, that know and believe these things, can have any

any joy, or take any comfort in their Children, unless they have some hope, that through the Covenant of Grace they are freed from the guilt, and under at least a probability of security from the dreadful effects of that their state. As for that supposition of some, that only Natural death was threatned against *Adam* in case of sin, and consequently that no other kind of death is come upon all Mankind through his fall, and hereupon that that is the only kind of death that Infants are subject to : Or that supposition of others, that the guilt of Original sin is wholly *de facto* taken away from all Mankind by Christ, and consequently that all are born in a state of Peace with God, and under the same Love, and Favour that *Adam* was under in his state of Innocency ; what relief soever the one or the other yields, can only arise from the darkness and error of the understanding and judgment, having no true foundation in the Word of God ; neither, were they granted, would they contribute in the least degree so much to the joy and comfort of Parents in their Children, as the Covenant if truly understood will do. And as for those which fetch their relief from the Doctrine of Election, though that Doctrine be certainly true, and may be improved as a considerable relief against that sorrow and grief, that must rationally arise to believing Parents from the apprehension of the natural states and conditions of their Children ; yet I doubt, if all things be well weighed, it will be found greatly wanting as to the yielding that plenary relief that it hath been usually endeavoured to be improved unto ; in as much as Election neither secures any from death in their Infant-state, nor can be looked upon according to any Scripture-ground as a security against

the dreadful effects of that state and condition, in case of death in that state : However this seems evident, that the relief to be fetcht from thence is alike to unbelievers with respect to their Children as to Believers with respect to theirs. Set aside interest in the Covenant and the Promises thereof, and a Believer hath no more assurance from Scripture that his Seed belongs to the Election of Grace, than any other man hath ; or suppose he should, yet that such as die in their Infancy do belong thereunto, he hath rather ground to fear than to hope : yea the ground he hath to fear they do not is vastly greater, than the ground he hath to hope that they do. And for Believers to have a clearer knowledge and apprehension of the lost estate of their Children as born Children of Wrath than others have, and yet to have no other ground of hope concerning them than others have, must needs greatly allay their comfort and joy in them ; yea they must rationally have less joy and take less comfort in their Children, than others have or do take in theirs. But now the Covenant as entred with Believers, extending to, and taking in their Children with them, and that as sealed and confirmed by an outward and visible Sign or Token both to them and their Seed, is a precious ground of hope to them concerning their Children, and may, if not wholly, yet in a great measure relieve them under that sorrow and grief that otherwise would arise from the consideration of their lost states by Nature. Now they may rationally rejoice and take comfort in them, as will appear more fully hereafter. To have had a bare promise belonging to their Children would have conduced greatly to their comfort and joy in them ; but to have the Promises confirmed, and that such various ways, must needs greatly fur-  
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ther their joy and comfort. And God is willing that his People should have the full joy and comfort of the Mercies and Blessings he gives them, and in particular of their Children, they being to be reckoned among the choicest of those Mercies and Blessings. This made *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the one his own child, the other his grand-child, so great comforts to *Abraham*, viz; that he could look upon them *as Heirs with him of the same Promise*. Could Parents only look upon their Children as children of Wrath, alas! what comfort or joy could they take in them? But now seeing them Heirs of the same Promises with themselves, and these Promises alike sealed and confirmed to them as to themselves, now they may rationally rejoice and take comfort in them; and that may be one reason why God hath not only extended his Covenant, but appointed the Application of the Token thereof to them, that they may have solid comfort and joy in them.

3. God may have appointed the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People, that he might thereby lay a greater obligation upon them, and more effectually provoke them to a diligent use of all those means, and a vigorous performance of all those duties himself hath directed them to, subservient to their Childrens embracement of the Covenant, and giving themselves up to him according to the tenour thereof, as they grow up to years of maturity. The multiplication of the Seed of *Abraham*, and thereby the supportation and increase of the Kingdom of Christ, the reduction of fain Man from the power of sin and Satan unto himself, and thereby delivering them from the Wrath to come, and bringing them to eternal happiness and blessedness to the

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praise of his own Grace ; are the great ends of God both in extending the Covenant to the Seed of his People , and ordaining the Application of the Token thereof unto them ; the attainment of all which ends is greatly subserved by the Application of the Token of the Covenant, as thereby Parents become under a greater obligation to bring them up ( as the Apostle speaks ) *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* This I shall the rather insist upon, because the late Author, whose Treatise hath been afore examined, hath seen meet (upon what grounds he declares not) to charge our Practice of Infant-Baptism as laying a foundation to Ignorance and Profaneness ; though himself a little after ( as was there observed ) sufficiently insinuates, or rather plainly confesseth the injustice and unreasonableness of that charge : and whether our Judgment and Practice, or our opposers be more justly chargeable with that mischief, shall now (God willing) be inquired into, only premising these two things.

1. First, That that cannot with any shew of reason be charged upon any Practice or Doctrine, as a mischief attending the one or the other, which is only consequential of some particular mistakes of particular persons owning that Doctrine, or walking in such a Practice. Let it be granted, as I shall not deny, but some Pædo-Baptists have fallen into, and maintained such gross mistakes about the uses and ends of Baptism, as have a too evident tendency to further Ignorance and Profaneness among those that profess the Christian Doctrine. Yet two things may be observed:

1. That they are only the mistakes of some particular

cular men that can be justly charged to be of that tendency.

2. That those mistakes respect Baptism in general, and not as applyed to Infants rather then to grown persons. And what an unrighteous charge that is, when that is imputed to the practice of Infant-Baptism, which may only possibly ensue from the mistakes of some particular men, and those respecting the Baptism of Infants no more then the Baptism of grown persons, is obvious to all. Such Doctrines and Practices as indeed lay the strongest obligations upon men to their duty either towards God or Man, may through the mistakes of some about them seem not only to countenance the neglect of that duty, but be taken to give an absolute discharge from it, yea to incourage to the direct contrary sins and impieties. To give instances is superfluous. But to charge such Doctrines or Practices with the mischief of laying a foundation to such sins and impieties, against which they most strongly oblige ; which only through the mistakes of men about them, have been improved by some to such an ill purpose, is most irrational and absurd.

2. It must also be premised, that mens living in the neglect of their duty, or in sins and impieties lying opposite thereunto, is no safe rule according to which to judge of the tendency of their avowed Judgments and Practices. Thus to make the actions or carriages of some owning the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism towards their Children the rule according to which they judge of the tendency of that Doctrine and Practice, is not only unsafe but altogether unreasonable. 'Tis possible that some that own that Doctrine and Practice, may not understand how great an obligation lies upon them thereby, to the utmost

care and diligence in the education of their Children. And it is alike possible that others that do understand that obligation, may greatly neglect that duty they know themselves obliged to. And let me say, I cannot but think that there are few of our opposers will be very forward to have the actions and carriages of Parents towards their Children made the *Tecmerion* or test of the soundness or unsoundness of their or our Judgment and Practice, neither will they be willing that the controversie shall be determined by that rule. It is too notorious that some have professedly declared their judgments to be against Catechizing, and the likewayes of instructing Children in the Mysteries of the Gospel, and against an authoritative requiring them so much as to use and attend upon the means appointed by God for the working of Grace in the hearts of Men, as well as against the Baptism of Infants. And how evident a foundation is laid thereby to Ignorance and Profaneness is not difficult to apprehend ; neither dare any of our opposers ( as I suppose ) affirm that the generality of Anti-Pædo-Baptists go beyond the generality of Pædo-Baptists in care and diligence in iustructing their Children, or using the means subserving their conversion, and taking hold of the Covenant as they grow to years of maturity. Let us then set aside the mistakes of some, and wilful neglects of others on the one, and on the other side, and inquire whether the Doctrine and Practice maintained by us, or by them, as truly stated, may be more deservedly charged with the mischief aforementioned. And here two things offer themselves to our enquiry.

1. Whether Pædo-Baptists or Anti-Pædo-Baptists, according to their respective Judgments and Practices,

ly

ly under the greater obligations, and have the more effectual motives to provoke and stir them up to the diligent use of all means, and faithful performance of all duties subserving their Childrens conversion, and personal embracement of the Covenant as they grow up to years of maturity.

2. Whether have they greater and surer ground of hope, or are under a greater probability that their use of means and performance of duty shall be effectual to the ends mentioned. That it is the duty of all men to endeavour the conversion of their Children, and use of all means in order thereunto, and that the success and efficacy of all endeavours of that nature, and use of means for that end, depend upon the blessing of God, is at present taken for granted. Our only enquiries are, whether Parents of the one or the other perswasion, have the stronger obligations, and more effectual motives to provoke and stir them up to the use of means, and performance of their duties subserving the forementioned ends, and whether have the greater ground to hope for success therein, and consequently whether the one or the other's use of means and performance of duty may be rationally concluded to be ordinarily more effectual and successful. To begin with the

1. First, Which how it ought to be resolved will easily appear by a double consideration.

1. That whatever obligations Anti-Pædo-Baptists can plead, or pretend themselves to ly under, or whatever motives they can according to their judgment and practice rationally improve, to provoke and stir up themselves to the diligent use of means, and performance of their duty in order to the conversion of their Children, the same obligations ly upon, and the

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same motives may as rationally be improved by Pædo-Baptists for the provoking and stirring up themselves to alike diligent use of means, and performance of their duties in order to the conversion of their Children.

I can at present call to mind only two things, that can with any shew of reason be pretended to ly as obligations upon, and be improved as Motives by Anti-Pædo-Baptists for the purposes mentioned beyond what confessedly ly upon, or may be improved by Pædo-Baptists. The

1. Is their professed owning and acknowledging their Children as such to have no interest in the Covenant, or right to the Token thereof. Now it may be said, those that professedly disclaim their Childrens having an interest in the Covenant, and right to the Seal thereof, and answerably apprehend them to be in the same condition with the rest of Mankind, who are yet strangers to the Covenants of Promise, must rationally be under a stronger obligation to endeavour their conversion, that so they may come regularly to an interest in both the Covenant, and token thereof, than those who take their Children to be already in the Covenant, and answerably have applyed the Token of the Covenant to them. Can a man that conceives his Children to be already in Covenant with God, and hath answerably applyed the Token of the Covenant to them, apprehend himself under such an obligation to instruct them, and use the means for their conversion; as a man must needs apprehend himself to be, that utterly disclaims any present interest that they have in it, and answerably suspends the Application of the Token to them? But to that I answer. It is true the judgment and practice of Anti-

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Pedo-Baptists lays no small obligation upon them to use their utmost endeavours after the early conversion of their Children. Those that suppose their children to have no interest in, or benefit by the Covenant as descended from them, sure are greatly concerned to use all means the Scriptures direct them to, whereby they may be brought into Covenant with God, through their own personal performance of the conditions of it themselves. And it is well if the men of that persuasion would seriously consider the obligations they are under, and how they acquit themselves with reference thereunto. But let it be observed, that to endeavour the conversion of their Children, and that they do personally take hold of the Covenant, equally concerns Pædo-Baptists, as it doth Anti-Pædo-Baptists, though not with reference to one and the same end. Anti-Pædo-Baptists are to endeavour the conversion of their Children, and their personal embracement of the Covenant, that they may come under the benefits and blessings of it. Pædo-Baptists are to endeavour the conversion of their Children, and their personal embracement of the Covenant, that their Covenant-state may be continued to them, and consequently that they may enjoy the blessings and benefits of the Covenant. So that both are equally obliged to seek and endeavour their childrens personal embracement of the Covenant, only the one in order to their coming into, the other in order to the continuance of their Covenant-state. It's true, in the imagination of the late Author it is a contradiction to hold the Doctrine of Perseverance, to baptize the Children of Believers, as including them in the Covenant of Grace, and yet after teach them conversion, to keep to his phrase. But this imagination aifeth merely

merely from ignorance about the Covenant, as entered with the Seed of Believers. Their Covenant-state simply and absolutely of it self infallibly secures not their Regeneration, or a saving work of Grace upon their hearts, during their pure Infant-state. The condition of their Covenant-interest is wholly without them, *viz.* in their Parents; but as they come to years of maturity, it is devolved upon themselves; and there is a necessity of a saving close with Christ, and sincere resignation of themselves to God in him as his, on their parts in order to the continuance of their Covenant-state: which that they may do, their Parents are to endeavour in the use of all means God hath directed them to. And the necessity hereof is an equal obligation upon Parents to use those means in order thereunto, that the necessity of such a close with Christ is upon those who disclaim their present interest in the Covenant, to use the means in order to that their closing in with Christ, that they may be brought into Covenant with God. So that I say both Pædo-Baptists and Anti-Pædo-Baptists are equally obliged to seek and endeavour the conversion of their Children, or to bring them to a saving personal close with Christ, though the one doth it that his Children may have an interest in the Covenant, which before he apprehended them to want: the other that their Children may be continued in Covenant, and answerably enjoy the full benefits and blessings of it. That which so strongly obligeth Parents to endeavour their Childrens interest in the Covenant, is their injoyments of the benefits and blessings of it; and continuance in Covenant is of equal necessity unto that, as the first admission into it is. Hence the obligation in the general is one and the same in all

Parents,

Parents, be their judgments for or against their Childrens interest in the Covenant, and right to the Sign and Token of it, to endeavour, and answerably use all means in order to their Childrens conversion, and saving close with Christ ; only the one doth it that his Children may have admission into, the other that they may be continued in a Covenant-state.

2. The other thing pleadable as a greater obligation upon and motive to Anti-Pædo-Baptists, to provoke and ingage them to a diligent use and performance of all duties in order to their Childrens Faith and Repentance, is their denial of them to have as such any Membership in the Church, and any right to the blessings, priviledges, and benefits attending Membership therein ; and on the other hand affirming the necessity of Regeneration, Faith, and Repentance, in order to their admission thereinto, and enjoyment of those benefits and blessings. Now it may be said, sure those who are of this persuasion must needs be more strongly obliged, and have more effectual motives to provoke them to endeavour the conversion of their Children, than those that conceive their Children already members of the Church, and answerably are already interested in those benefits and blessings. To this I shall only say as before, that the obligations upon, and motives to the one and the other to endeavour the conversion of their Children are one and the same, though the ends are different ; for to wave that question, whether Infants are admitted into the universal, or into a particular Church, this is certain, that the want of Faith and Repentance, when grown up to years of maturity, disannuls all right, *Coram Deo*, to their Membership in the Church, be it universal, or particular, and forfeits their

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their right to all the blessings, benefits, and priviledges that as admitted thereunto they had a right to, and interest in. Now it is a right to, and injoyment of those blessings and priviledges that is the obligation and motive to Parents to endeavour the conversion of their Children. Church-membership absolutely considered signifies nothing ; 'tis interest in, and the injoyment of the aforesaid benefits, blessings and priviledges that makes Church-membership a good unto men, whether old or young. Now I say, Conversion, Faith and Repentance are as necessary to the continuing an interest in, and actually injoying them to those who are already Members of the Church, as they are for their first admission thereto, and thereby coming to an interest in, and the injoyment of them, who afore were Aliens, as the Apostle speaks, from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, or wholly out of the Church. So that the obligations upon, and motives ingaging Parents to endeavour the conversion of their Children, or bring them to true Faith and Repentance, as they grow up to years of maturity, are the same to all men, whether of the one, or the other perswasion. But then,

2. The other consideration I would offer is, That there are several obligations lying upon, and several motives improvable by Pædo-Baptists, beyond what those of the contrary perswasion can apprehend themselves under, or can be rationally improved by them, to provoke them diligently to use all means, and vigorously perform all duties, they are in the Scriptures directed to in order to their Childrens conversion, Faith and Repentance.

1. First, There is that special interest, and propriety that God hath in their Children, God lays

claim

claim to a special propriety in the Seed of his People, they are his. Hence he aggravates the sin of his ancient People, in offering up their children to Idols, by the consideration of his own propriety in them, (Ezek. 16. 20, and 21.) *Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured,* (viz. to their Idols) *is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children?* They were theirs by Generation, but his by Adoption. To offer any sacrifice to Idols is exceeding bad, but to offer humane sacrifices is worse; but to offer their children that proceeded from their own bowels, is yet a higher aggravation of their sin. There was not only cruelty, but ἀσοεγία, and that even in the highest degree. And yet further, that which greatly aggravated their sin was, that those they sacrificed were not in their own power, they were God's children that they sacrificed, and answerably here was the highest injustice, I may call it Sacriledge, a robbing God to honour their Idols. But this we see, God claims a peculiar interest and propriety in the Seed of his People, and they are not only his, as all Creatures are, but they are his by special choice of them for his own use and service; therefore Believers, including their Seed, are said to be *a chosen generation* (1 Pet. 2. 9.) and according to a special relation they stand in towards him, they are called *his servants*, (Levit. 25. 41.) Now this interest and propriety that God hath in the Seed of his People is a strong obligation upon them to bring them up for God, for his use and service, that they may answer the relation wherein they stand towards him. God gives his People children, and intrusteth them with them, but it is to bring them up for

for him. Hence to neglect the holy education of Children, is not only to transgress a command, but to be unfaithful in a trust, which aggravates the sin.

A trust lays a peculiar obligation upon men to be faithful in it, *It is required in Stewards that a man be found faithful*, saith the Apostle ( 1 Cor. 4. 2. ) when a man hath intrusted his child with another to be educated and instructed by him in any Art or Science, he expects faithfulness in him ; and the very consideration of the child's being intrusted with him for such an end or purpose would strongly oblige him thereunto. Thus the Seed of Believers are God's, he claims propriety in them, and intrusts them with Parents to be brought up for himself ; and both Justice and Faithfulness requires that they do bring them up accordingly. The Apostle improves it as an argument to ingage Believers to glorifie God both with soul and body, because both *are his*, ( 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. ) Now as they are to glorify God both with soul and body ; so they are to endeavour after such a fitness and disposition of both, that they may be more apt and meet to glorifie him with both : So their Children being the Lord's, they ought to endeavour after their fitness and meetnes for his use and service, and answerably to educate and bring them up : And that interest and propriety that God hath in them, with the consideration of their being intrusted with them for him, is a strong obligation upon them so to do : Sure it must be grievous to tender hearts to think that God's own servants should prove enemies to him, especially this being through any neglect on their part, that those that God hath designed for himself, should rebel against him through a failure

lure on their part in respect of their duty towards them. But

2. There is the Parents own act in dedicating theirs unto God, and ratifying and solemnizing that dedication of them by the Application of the Token of the Covenant. They are not only God's by virtue of his choice, but by virtue of their Parents resignation and dedication of them to him; which dedication they have made of them to God, they have also ratified and confirmed in an outward and solemn way, by applying the Token of the Covenant to them, and that must needs ( supposing them to understand what they do ) more strongly oblige, and more effectually move them to bring them up for God. They give them up to God to be his under their own hands and seals, as I may so speak. Now Parents thus dedicating and giving up their children to God, doth necessarily imply and include a purpose to bring them up for God, otherwise their giving them up to him would be mere Hypocrisie and deceit. And therefore when *Elkanah* and *Hannah* had dedicated *Samuel* unto God, to serve him in the Tabernacle from his very Child-hood, they bring him up betimes to the Tabernacle, probably before he was capable of performing any service there: It was immediatly as he was weaned, therefore he is said to be young, ( 1 Sam. 1. 24. ) a child a child, as the Hebrew \* is, that is, a very young child; and the reason of their bringing him up so early, is conceived to be, that he might be instructed in the Law, and thereby fitted and prepared for future service; having given him up to God, they were careful to bring him up for God, to bring him up so, as he might

\* *Hebrei, cum superlativis careant, pro iis germinatione utuntur.*

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might be fitted for his service. And this sincerity  
and uprightness in the dedication that Parents make  
of their Children unto God doth indispensably re-  
quire. *I know Abraham*, saith God, *that he will*  
*command his Children and his household after him*,  
( Gen. 18. 19. ) as if the Lord should say, I know  
him to be a faithful and upright man; hence having  
given up his Children and Household to me, he will  
use the means that they may serve me. So when  
*Jeptah had vowed that whosoever came first out of*  
his door to meet him should be the Lords, though it  
proved to be his daughter, and she his only Child,  
yet he will give her up to God, according to the in-  
tendment of his vow ( what that was I determine  
not) and he gives this reason, *I have opened my mouth*  
*to the Lord, and I cannot go back*, Judg. 11. 35. His  
own act in dedicating his daughter, though it was but  
an implicite dedication of her in particular, is to him  
an indispensable obligation to give her up to God. So  
Parents actual dedication of their Children unto God,  
especially having ratified and solemnized that dedi-  
cation by the Application of the Token of the Co-  
venant to them, adds greatly to the obligation that  
they are under to bring them up so, as that they may  
be the Lord's, may give up themselves to serve and  
honour him when they grow up to a capacity so to  
do.

3. There are the great advantages that their Chil-  
dren are under, in order to the enjoyment of all the  
grace, benefits, and blessings of the Covenant, as a  
further obligation upon, and motive to believing Pa-  
rents, diligently to use the means, and perform their  
duty subservient thereunto. What these advantages  
are, shall ( if the Lord will ) be shewed hereafter.

At

At present I say for Parents to see their Children under special advantages in order to their injoyment of the Grace, benefits, and blessings of the Covenant, must needs strongly oblige, and powerfully move as well as encourage them to endeavour that they may come to the actual injoyment of them. When a man either seeth himself, or his Children, in a fair way, and under special advantages to injoy any good, he is thereby provokt to greater diligence in the use of means, that either himself, or his child may injoy that good. This was that which at least in part quickned *Moses* to so great importunity that he might go over *Jordan*, to see the good Land, *viz.* *Canaan*, because God had begun to shew him his greatness, and his mighty hand, (*Deut. 3. 24.*) *Oh Lord,* saith he, *thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand, I pray thee let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan:* as if he should say, thou hast brought me through all the difficulties and dangers of the Wilderness, thou hast begun to make way to thy Peoples entrance into, and possession of this good Land, and must I now, when so nigh unto it, and in such a fair way with the rest of thy people to come to the possession and injoyment of it, yet be cut off, and never come to it? The loss of falling short of a mercy, when a man comes nigh to it, and is under peculiar advantages for the injoyment of it, troubles more than the non-injoyment of the same, or like Mercy, when a man is under no probability, or hath no peculiar advantages ever to injoy it. Hence to be nigh to, or under peculiar advantages for the injoyment of any mercy, quickens to diligence in the use of means, that we may not then fall short of it, but may actually injoy it. And this

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holds true whether the mercy respects a mans self, or his Children, or near Relations. Now I say the Children of Believers are near to, and under more peculiar advantages for the injoyment of the Grace, benefits and blessings of the Covenant, than the Seed of others are : Parents have ( as I may so speak ) some kind of hold of that grace, and those blessings and benefits for their Children ; and Children have some hold for themselves : and when a man hath any hold of a good for himself or his, he is loth to let it go. Saith the Apostle to *Timothy*, and in him to all Christians, *Fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold on eternal life, 1 Tim. 6. 12.* The latter branch of this exhortation, viz. *To lay hold on eternal life,* may be taken as directive to Christians what to do more effectually to ingage and quicken themselves to a vigorous prosecution of their Spiritual Warfare, *they are to lay hold on eternal life :* ἐπιλαβότε τὸν ζωὴν σωτηρίας, saith the Apostle, which may be done by Christians while in this life. There are several wayes whereby Believers may lay hold on eternal life, while in the World, as by an applicatory Faith, whereby they apply and appropriate the promises of eternal life to themselves, as the *Psalmist*, *Psalm. 16.* so *Psalm. 37. 24.* So the Apostle, *2 Tim. 4. 8.* So again eternal life is laid hold on by ardency of affection and desire, by possessing our selves of the first fruits of it, &c. Now to lay hold on eternal life these or the like ways puts life into Believers endeavours, so to fight this good fight of Faith, as thereby to come to the full injoyment of that life in Heaven. When a man hath got any hold of any good for himself or his, he will strive and tug hard rather than part with it. Now I say Believers have some hold of the Grace and blessings

sings of the Covenant for their Children, they see their Children have some hold through the extent of the Covenant to them, hence they must needs be more effectually ingaged and provoked to greater diligence in the use of means, that their Children may come to the actual enjoyment of that Grace, those blessings and priviledges, than they would be, had not either themselves or Children any such hold of that Grace, and those blessings and benefits.

4. There is the goodness love and kindness of God in extending his Covenant to their Seed, and vouchsafing the ratification and confirmation of it, by the Application of the Token thereof unto them, as a strong obligation upon, and motive to Parents to use their utmost diligence in order to their Childrens embracement of the Covenant, and giving up themselves to God as his People, as thereby the Kingdom of Christ may be enlarged and his Interest promoted in the World. The love and kindness of God, how or which way soever exprest, either towards themselves or theirs, is greatly obliging to sincere Believers, to endeavour to their utmost power the promotion of the Interest, and enlargement of the Kingdom of Christ in the World. Love is of a constraining nature, it hath a compulsive force and power in it, *We love him, because he loved us first*, saith John. Love begets and excites love, and love is industrious and laborious; hence we read of the labour of love, (1 Thess. 1.3.) The Apostle gives it as the great reason of their so zealous preaching the Gospel, that to some they seemed to be beside themselves, viz. because the love of Christ did constrain them, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. It is true, the love that God hath exprest towards a Believer, in the things he hath done for, and the good he hath vouch-

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safed to himself as personally considered in and by Christ, may and ought to have a constraining force upon him to live to him, and answerably to endeavour to his utmost power according to the capacity wherein he stands to promote the Interest and Kingdom of Christ in the World. But yet God's extending his Covenant to their Seed, and confirming it by the Application of the Token thereof unto them, must rationally greatly add to the compulsive force and efficacy that his love hath upon them, and that for a twofold reason.

1. Because his love to themselves is greatly heightened thereby. To all he hath done for, and vouchsafed to themselves, there is the addition of that Grace vouchsafed unto theirs: and the greater the love of God is, and appears to be to a Believer, the greater efficacy and power it hath to excite his love unto God, and constrain him to lay out himself for the advantage of the Interest and Kingdom of Christ in the World.

2. Because God's making the Seed of Believers partakers of the same Grace and Goodness vouchsafed to them, makes it alike reasonable that they, as they grow up to years of maturity, should live to him, as they themselves desire to do.

There is a meetness and fitness that those that partake of the Grace and Goodness of God should live to him. And Parents seeing their Children made partakers of the same Grace and Goodness of God that themselves do partake of, have the same Covenant extended to them, that is entred with themselves, and that ratified and confirmed to them the same way, as it is ratified and confirmed to themselves, they must needs judge it alike reasonable, and meet that theirs

should

should live unto God, as well as themselves. Hence they must needs be more effectually stirred up, and provokt to use their utmost endeavours that they may so do. So that I say the Love, Grace and Goodness of God in extending his Covenant to the Seed of his People, and ratifying and confirming it by the Application of the Token thereof to them, is a very great obligation upon, and may and ought to be improved as a powerful motive by them, to provoke and ingage themselves to the utmost diligence, in using all means that their Children may personally imbrace the Covenant, and give up themselves to God as his People, as they grow up to years of maturity, as thereby the Interest of Christ is promoted, and his Kingdom enlarged. And yet further there are three things, the consideration of which may and will still heighten and increase the constraining efficacy and force, that the Love, Grace, and Goodnes of God hath upon the hearts of believing Parents to move and provoke them to the afore-mentioned diligence.

1. That it is the Interest of their Redeemer that is promoted, and his Kingdom that is inlarged thereby.

2. That God hath extended his Covenant and appointed the Application of the Token thereof to the Seed of Believers, with reference to this very end, *viz.* the increase and inlargement of the Kingdom of Christ in the World, and that in pursuance of that promise made to him, that he should have the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for his Possession.

3. That they are their own Children, those that came out of their own bowels, towards whom they are to use the means, in order to the ends mentioned. The Love and Goodness of God hath a constraining

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power upon the hearts of Believers, to do his will however revealed, or whatever reference their doing of it hath. But when the things, whereabout his will is revealed, relate to the promotion of the Interest and inlargement of the Kingdom of their Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, and the increase and inlargement of his Kingdom was designed by his expressing his love and goodness to them in the ways he hath done; and they are their Children the fruit of their own bodies, that are the objects of their duty, which in obedience to the will of God they are to perform; surely now the Love, Grace, and Goodness of God must needs have the greatest efficacy and power in it, to engage, yea constrain them to a vigorous and diligent performance of that their duty.

5. There is the aggravation that the sin of the Seed of Believers in not accepting of the Covenant, and performing the conditions of it, receives from their precedent Covenant-state, further to oblige and provoke Parents, who own that their Covenant-state, and have applyed the Token of the Covenant on the account thereof, to endeavour to the utmost of their power, that they may accept of and perform the conditions of it. Not to accept of the Covenant, but on the other hand to reject it, is a greater sin in those, that have a precedent interest in it, than in those that have no such interest. It was a greater sin in *Esau* to despise his Birth-right and Blessing, then the bare not taking hold of the Covenant was to those that had no such birth-priviledg. To despise or reject a good granted, is more than the bare not receiving any good offered. Now Parents considering how greatly the sin of their Children will be aggravated, in case they perform not the conditions of, but on the other hand reject

reject the Covenant, and consequently that their condemnation will be greater than the condemnation of others, must needs strongly oblige, and more effectually provoke them to greater diligence in the discharge of their duty towards them, in order to the preventing their rejection; and on the other hand in order to their accepting and performing the conditions of the Covenant.

6. There is the reference that Parents faithful discharge of their duty towards their Children hath to their Childrens preservation in their Covenant-state, and consequently enjoying the full good and benefit thereof, as they grow up to years of maturity, as a farther obligation upon, and motive to provoke them thereunto. God hath taken the Seed of Believers into Covenant with himself, as they are their Seed, and continues their Covenant-state during their Infancy, on the account of their Parents Faith. But when they grow up to years of maturity, the condition of their continuance in that Covenant-state, and consequently enjoying the blessings of the Covenant, is devolved upon themselves; they must in their own persons imbrace and take hold of the Covenant, and perform the conditions of it, which that they may do, God requires their Parents to teach them his way, and command them to walk in it; which duty of Parents in teaching and commanding their Children is the first and most proper means appointed of God in order to their personal embracement, and taking hold of his Covenant; and hence in case Parents fail in the discharge of their duty, their Children are deprived of the first and most proper means subservient to their preservation in their Covenant-state. And though it may seem hard to say, that God

will not vouchsafe other means, and blefs them to the attaining of that end ; yet this I must say, there is more depending upon Parents discharge of their duty, than most are aware of ; and that God will vouchsafe other means and bless them to supply the defect of Parents duty, is (as I judge) more than they have warrant to expect. However the depriving them of the first and most proper means must needs be extremely hazardous, and is usually given as a main reason of so many of the Seed of the Righteous proving wicked. And did Parents but understand, and seriously consider this, how great an obligation must it needs be to them faithfully to discharge their duty towards their Children ?

7. And lastly, There is the dishonour redounding unto God, by Childrens rejecting the Covenant, and falling off to ways of sin and profaneness, yet farther to oblige Parents to a faithful discharge of their duty towards them. When men hear the Covenant-interest of the Seed of Believers asserted, and see the Token thereof applyed to them, and yet after see them to run into the same wayes of sin and ungodliness with the Children of others, they are apt to reflect upon God, and to charge him with unfaithfulness in his promises, or deluding the World with a shew of extending more Grace to Believers than indeed he doth. And this very thing, viz. the frequent apostacies of the Seed of Believers, and their walking in the same ways of impiety with the Children of others, though wholly groundlessly, yet I conceive is no little stumbling-block in the way of those whose judgment and practice lyes opposite to what hath been pleaded for. Now the preventing this dishonour redounding unto God, and removing

this

this stumbling-block out of the way of the weak, is a strong obligation upon Parents to a faithful performance of their duty towards their Children. And the laying these and the like obligations upon Parents to a diligent performance of that their duty towards their Children, may be one special reason of God's appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them. And by what hath been said we may see how much greater obligations are upon Believers, who own their Childrens interest in the Covenant, and have the Token thereof applyed to them upon that account, and how many motives are improveable by them to provoke and stir up themselves to a faithful discharge of their duty towards them; than what are upon, or improveable by the contrary minded, according to their respective judgments and practices.

2. The other enquiry is, whether Pædo-Baptists, or Anti-Pædo-Baptists, according to what they respectively hold with reference to their Children, have greater and surer ground to hope, and expect that the means used, or duties performed by them, shall be effectual and successful; or whether the means used, and duties performed by the one, or the other, be more likely to prove effectual and successful for the accomplishing the ends aimed at?

*Answ.* Now for this that the advantages ly on the side of the Pædo-Baptists will be undeniably evident by a double consideration, which I shall but as it were mention, because they must both be more fully insisted upon in a more proper place.

1. Consider that Pædo-Baptists, according to what they hold with reference to their Children, have vastly more means to use in order to their conversion and embracement

imbracement of the Covenant, and giving themselves up to God according to the tenour of it, then Anti-Pædo-Baptists have; they have many more motives, arguments, and encouragements to propose, apply to, and press upon their Children, than the contrary-minded have. And where the means are greater and more effectual in themselves, their efficacy and success may, according to the ordinary way of God's working upon men, be expected to be answerable.

2. They have many promises both made to themselves with reference to their Children and households, and to their Children, as under the Covenant, and of the visible Church and Kingdom of Christ, beyond what the contrary-minded can according to their judgments and principles apply to themselves or theirs: which promises, though they should not infallibly secure Grace to all the Seed of Believers, how careful soever they may be in the use of means, and how faithful soever in the discharge of their duty towards them, yet they are vastly greater ground to hope for success, than there would be, supposing no such promises were made either to Parents or Children. But these things shall (if the Lord will) be more cleared up hereafter. Now then let all men judge how unrighteous and unreasonable that charge laid upon Pædo-Baptism is, *viz.* that it lays a foundation to Ignorance and Profaneness; and how much more justly that charge may be laid upon the contrary judgment and practice. We see Pædo-Baptists are under vastly greater obligations to a diligent use of means, and performance of duty in order to the conversion of their Children, and their personal imbracement of the Covenant, than the contrary-minded can according to their judgment look upon themselves as under,

under, and have vastly more ground to expect that their use of means, and performance of duty shall be successful, than they have. But let that suffice for the reasons of Gods appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People, as they respect the Parents, to whose Seed that Application is to be made.

3. The reasons respecting the Children themselves, to whom the Token of the Covenant is to be applyed ; and thus the great reason is their good, benefit, and advantage. But that brings me to the second grand enquiry. From what hath been said, we may evidently see, that the rationality of this Institution is not only secured to us by the infinit wisdom of God instituting, but sufficient reason for it lyes obvious to all serious considerate minds.

## C H A P. III.

The second Question proposed. A brief Introduction to the Answer of it. The first benefit that the Seed of Believers receive by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them declared, viz. They have thereby a solemn admission into, and Membership in the visible Church, Kingdom, or Family of Christ. An Objection answered. The good redounding to them by that their admission and Membership shewed in two Instances. 1. They are comprehended in, and have an equal benefit with the rest of the Members of the Church, by all these prayers put up for the Church in general. 2. They are under that special providential care that Christ exerciseth over his Church. 3. Questions relating thereunto resolved.

Quest. 2. What are the Benefits, and advantages arising to the Infant-seed of Believers, from the Application of the Tokens of the Covenant to them, or what good do they receive thereby?

Answ. That all Ordinances of Divine Original, are a signification and signal expression of the good will of God unto men; and consequently aim at, and

tend to the good and benefit of those that are the due and proper subjects of them, hath been intimated already, and may be alike infallibly concluded from the goodness, as their rationality from the wisdom of the Institutor. As for that special Ordinance under our present consideration, the Apostles answer to much the same question, put with respect to Circumcision, is applicable to, and may be given, as a more general solution of the question now put, respective to both Circumcision and Baptism, as applyed to Infants: the advantage they have thereby *is much, and that every way.* What that good and advantage is, and wherein it doth consist is now to be inquired into: and in general, or as to the sum and substance of it, it's threefold.

1. First, They thereby are solemnly admitted into, and incorporated in the visible Church, Kingdom, or Family of Christ, and thereupon become, to use the Apostles phrase, *Fellow-citizens of the Saints, and of the Household of God.* That Baptism now is as Circumcision of old was, a solemn right for the initiation, and admission of all those that are rightful Subjects of it, into the visible Church, or body of Christ, is agreed on on all hands; which that the Infants we now speak of are, hath been already proved, and is now taken for granted, which being granted, that they have this good and benefit by it will receive a ready acknowledgment from all, and indeed that to have a Membership in the Church, or to be *Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God,* is a good, or advantage unto men, cannot be rationally questioned by any, though wherein the good and advantage of it in the case of Infants does consist, is not obvious unto all. And therefore must now be

more thoroughly searched into, and declared. But before I proceed to that, one objection must be removed out of our way, which seems in the judgment of some, strongly to oppose Infants injoyment of that privilege, and consequently their right to that Ordinance, appointed for the solemn admission of men into it: And it is this.

*Object.* It may be said, that it may seem that Infants as such cannot rightfully be admitted into, or incorporated in the visible Church or body of Christ, or be of his Household, and Family as visible, and that for this reason: Because membership in the visible Church, Body or Kingdom of Christ does presuppose membership in his invisible Body, seeing to be a member of his visible Body, is nothing else but visibly to appear to be a real member of his invisible Body: that distinction of visible and invisible not being *distinguo rei, sed tantum nominis*, only a distinction of one and the same Church, à dupli modo unionis & communionis cum Christo capite (still) interno & externo; so that the Church by these terms of visible, and invisible, is only distinguished of, in regard of a certain adjunct, viz. The manner or kind of union and communion that the several members it is constituted of, have with Christ the head, viz. internal, and real, or only external, or appearing: Hence all that are, or ought to be received as members of the visible Church, they are and ought to be such, as visibly appear to have real internal Union and Communion with Christ. Now it will be said, that Infants as such seem incapable of any such Union, and Communion with him; or suppose them simply, or absolutely capable; yet whether any actually have, especially which of them in particular have such a Union, and

and Communion with Christ, is wholly unknown to us, and then how can they be said visibly to appear members of the invisible Body of Christ? which they must do in case they have a right to membership in his visible Body.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* In answer to this Objection I would say these three or four things.

1. First, That the difficulty of resolving some doubts, that may arise with reference to persons right to, or enjoyment of Gospel-privileges, ought not to be pleaded for the overthrowing, or disanulling their right to them, when God hath evidently declared them in his Word, to have such a right to, or to have had, by his own approbation the actual possession and enjoyment of them: God may have plainly revealed their right, and yet more darkly revealed many things relating to that their right. Instances would not be wanting, would I insist upon them, of Gospel-privileges, that the Scriptures evidently declare persons so and so qualified to have a real right to, and to have the actual possession and enjoyment of, and yet doubts of no easie resolution may be raised with reference to their right to them, and the way and manner of their coming to the possession of them.

2. But secondly, And rather that the case of Infants of Believers now, is no otherwise concerned in this Objection, than the case of the Infant-seed of the Church and people of God under the first Testament were, and it may be pleaded with equal strength against their having been Members of the visible Church, or Body of Christ then, as against the right of Infant-seed of Believers to membership in the visible Church, or body of Christ now; the Church then

then constituted, and made up of the natural posterity of *Abraham*, with the addition of some few Proselites from among the Gentiles, was the visible Body of Christ then, as well as the Church made up of Jews and Gentiles under the new Testament is. This I have so fully evidenced elsewhere, that nothing more need be added here, and indeed the Apostle in *Eph. 3. 6.* is so plain and express, that the Gentiles, as converted to the Faith, *are of the same body with the Jews* under the first Testament; that to deny them to have been the body of Christ, is to deny the Church now to be so; and that the Apostle speaks there of the visible body of Christ, is undenyable, in that what he speaks of the Gentiles more generally, he applyes to that Church of the *Ephesians* in particular, *Chap. 2. 19.* Each individual member of which Church that they did belong to the invisible Body of Christ he would not affirm, but plainly intimates his suspition of the contrary, *Acts 20. ult.* Yet he speaks indefinitely, or universally of this Church as injoying this priviledg, to be of the same body, *viz.* of Christ, that the Jews afore were of: an undoubted evidence that he speaks of the body of Christ as visible: so that the Jews, or the Jewish Church under the first Testament, was the visible body of Christ; for the Gentiles as converted to the Faith, and gathered into particular Churches, *are of the same body*. Now it is past all rational contradiction, that the Infant-seed both of Jews, and proselited Gentiles were Members of the same body with their Parents: hence let it be resolved how far, or in what sense membership in the visible Body of Christ, and Union, and Communion with him as the Head was necessary, or presupposed to their membership in his visible Body, the fame,

same, and no other is necessary, and must be presupposed to Infants membership in the visible Body of Christ still : the same answer then that will satisfie this Objection, as they were concerned in it, will alike satisfy it, as the Infant-seed of Believers now are concerned in it, in as much as they are equally and alike concerned in it.

3. Thirdly and lastly, I answer, that it may be granted, yea, I conceive, it must be affirmed ; that the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, have by vertue of the Covenant entred with them, a real and proper Union with Christ, and answerably may be looked upon, and reputed in some sense, as Members of his invisible body, and on that ground are to be admitted into his visible Body, Church or Kingdom ; only here, that all mistakes may be obviated, we must distinguish of Union with Christ,

it is either Political, or Physical :

\* By that Union I call Political, I intend that Union, which consists in those mutual Relations, wherein Christ and his Church stand related each to other, as King and Subjects, Master and Servants, Shepherd and Sheep : the *ratio fundendi*, or *fundamentum proximum* of this Union, is the mutual consent of Christ, and those that are thus united to him, either in their own persons, as in the case of the adult, or on their behalf, by those *cujus juris sunt*, as in the case of Infants, to accept and take each other in these respective Relations ; and this is that Union properly constituted by the Covenant.

By that Union I call Physical, I intend a higher kind of Union, viz. *cujus vinculum est Spiritus sanctus*,

\* *It i Christo Ecclesia unita est, ut in ea unione extet exemplum utriusq; unionis, scilicet Politice & Physicae. Vide Camer. de Ecclesiæ. p. 225.*

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*Elus*, that which is made by the indwelling of the same Spirit that was first poured out upon Christ in the soul, which is proper to those that are truly regenerated ; in regard of which, they are compared to *branches*, and Christ to a *Vine*, and Christ and they are said to be *one spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. or one spiritual body : and though it is true, that in respect of the adult, those that have a Political Union with Christ, are supposed also to have a Physical Union ; yet it is not necessary that all that have the former should have the latter : Jesus Christ may take men into what degree or kind of Union with himself he sees meet. Now when I say the Infant-seed of Believers have a real Union with Christ, I mean it only of a Political, which we may call a mere relative Union ; he is their King, they are his Subjects ; he their Master, they his Servants ; he their Shepherd, they his Sheep : and this Union they have with Christ is the proper ground of their admission into the Church visible, or into the Kingdom, Family, Household, or, as I may so speak, Sheepfold of Christ ; and that the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, have such a Union with Christ, may be evidenced by a twofold argument.

1. First all those, by whom, or on whose behalf the conditions of the Covenant are really and truly performed, have a real and true Union with Christ ; but though not by ( for that's not required of them ) yet on the behalf of the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, the conditions of the Covenant are really and truly performed. Therefore, &c.

Both Propositions carry their own evidence with so much clearness, that as I cannot at present apprehend what can be replyed to ; so I conceive the ad-

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ding of any thing for the proof of either would be superfluous ; surely the conditions of the Covenant between Christ, and God in him, and the Seed of Believers, being performed, though not by them, yet on their behalf, which is all one as though by them there must needs immediatly result such a Union with Christ. Take it in all instances of this kind of Union, and the mutual acceptation and performance of the Covenant, or contracts by which that Union is constituted, and the Union it self, necessarily results and flows therefrom.

Now that the conditions of the Covenant are really and truly performed on the behalf of the Seed of Believers, needs no other proof, than that they are Believers, whose Seed we now speak of ; it is the Faith and Repentance of Parents, that are the conditions of the Seed's acceptation into Covenant.

2. The same Union, that the Covenant constitutes between Christ and some, it constitutes between him and all, with whom it is equally, and alike established ; but the Covenant constitutes a true and real Union between Christ and some, *viz.* adult Believers, therefore it constitutes the same Union between Christ and others, *viz.* their Infant-seed, it being equally and alike established with them, as it is with Believers themselves. This argument carries its evidence with the same clearness as the former. For though it is true, the conditions of the Covenant, as established with adult Believers, differ from the conditions of it, as established with Infants ; yet that hinders not, but that the Union constituted between Christ and them, is one and the same with that constituted between him and adult Believers. In as much as the Covenant accepts of the Parents Faith,

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as the condition of the Child's admission thereinto, as well as the Faith of grown Persons for their own admission thereinto; now it is the Covenant as absolutely considered, and not as requiring such and such conditions, that constitutes this kind of Union between Christ and men, be they adult or Infants; neither can that higher kind of Union, (*viz.* Physical,) that Believers have with Christ, be pleaded as a prejudice to Infants injoyment of this lower kind of Union with him, seeing neither the antecedent operations, or consequent indwelling of the Spirit in the soul, whereby that higher kind of Union is effected, are any otherwise necessary to this lower kind of Union, which I call Political or merely relative, than the performance of the conditions of the Covenant by the adult, and the Promises of the Covenant appertaining to them having personally performed them, make so to be, when the conditions of the Covenant may be truly and really performed without such operations of the Spirit, as in the case of Infants they may, and there is no promise of the indwelling presence of the Spirit, as is also their case; there a political Union may be really constituted, and yet no higher Union granted: so that Infants have a real Political Union with Christ is evident, and indeed to grant them an interest in the Covenant, and yet deny them such a Union would be absolutely contradictory. What Objections carry any appearance of opposition against what hath been now granted, yea asserted, shall be considered hereafter.

This I say at present, that the Infant-seed of Believers may be granted, yea must be affirmed to have a true and real Political, or relative Union with Christ the Head of the Church, which as it gives them a righ-

to membership, so is a sufficient warrant for their admission into the actual possession of that their right in the Church, Kingdom, or Family of Christ as visible here upon earth: neither are we concerned, as I conceive, to inquire, or determine how far, or in what sense they may be said by virtue of this Union, to be Members of the Church, or Body of Christ as invisible, seeing our judgment and practice relating unto them have divine revelation for their ground and rule. This objection being removed out of our way, I shall now proceed to inquire, what good, benefit, or advantage the Infant-seed of Believers have by their membership in the visible Church, Body, or Kingdom of Christ; and it may be reduced to these three heads.

1. First, which I shall but touch upon, they, as Members of the visible Church, are comprehended in, and have the benefit of those prayers, that are continually made for the whole *Israel* of God, or the Church of God in general, as it is the duty of Believers in their more general Assemblies, so of each particular Believer, to make known their requests unto God for themselves, or on his own behalf, *by prayer, supplication with thanksgiving*, as the Apostle speaks, *Phil. 4*. So to pray for *Jerusalem*, or the Church of God in general, *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, in *Psal. 122.6*. By *Jerusalem* we are to understand the Church of God in general, and as this is the duty of Believers, so that love both to Christ the head, and to the whole Body, of which each in particular is a Member, that is the inseparable effect of regeneration, obliges and constrains them to the performance of it, hence it is but seldom but sincere Saints, especially in their more solemn addresses unto God, do leave some petitions for the Church in general, see it

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in the Psalmist, *Psal. 51. 18.* So in the Apostle,  
*Gal. 1. 16.* Though the one was only making application to God for relief in a particular case, the other leaving his valedictory benediction with those he had written to ; yet *Zion*, or the *Israel* of God, shall not be forgotten by the one or the other. Hence there is, as I may so speak, a stock of Prayers, ( not treasury of Merits ) continually treasuring up for the Church of God, in which the Infant-seed of Believers have their interest and share, and this is no small benefit to have so many thousands, whom the Lord hath appointed as his remembrancers, daily putting him in mind of his Covenant and Promises, as made with and to his Church, whereof they are Members, as well as of the Covenant and Promises made with, and to them in special, as the Seed of such Parents : and this, if duly considered, might yield great comfort to believing Parents, that theirs, as well as themselves, are daily presented before the Throne of Grace by so many, who are under the promise of having the ear of God open to them.

2. And rather being Members of the visible Church, Kingdom or Family of our Lord Christ, they have a joynct interest with all other members in that special providential care, that he exercises over his own house. That the work of providence is put into the hand of Christ by the Father, is evident ; as from variety of other Scriptures, so in special from that, *John 5. 22.* where Christ himself tells us, *that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son* ; yet not so, as to cease to work himself, for the Father works in and by the Son : but that the work of Providence is put into the hand of the Son,

is evident; and this work of Providence, or providential care of Christ is twofold.

1. First more general, and so it extends to the utmost bounds and limits of the creation of God; no creature that received its being from God, but it is under providence, as administered by Christ, as all things are made by him, so by him do all things consist.

2. Secondly more special, and thus the Church is the proper object of the special providential care of Christ; therefore he is said by way of Emphasis to be *the keeper of Israel*, Psal. 121. 4. *He that keepeth Israel* (or as the words may be read, *he that is keeping Israel*) *neither slumbreth nor sleepeth*: as we have here the special object of divine Providence, (*viz.*) *Israel*, that is the Church, so the exactness and speciality of that providential care exercised towards, or over that object intimated, partly in the word *keepeth*, or *keeping*, that is carefully, and diligently keeping, \* more fully declared in the following words, *neither slumbreth nor sleepeth*: a man though he fall not asleep, yet, if he slumber, is greatly indisposed to discharge any work he is engaged in: a shepherd though he be not fast asleep, as we say, yet, if in a slumber, his sheep are exposed to danger: but to shew the exactness of that providential care that our Lord Christ exerciseth over his Church, it is here said of him, *nec dormit, nec dormitat, he neither sleeps, nor slumbers*; And hence again the Lord promiseth to keep his Church, speaking of it under the notion of a Vineyard, *night and day*, Isa. 27. 3. as his eye is always open, he is always awake, not in the least slumbering; so his eye is always upon his

\* *Curam solicitudinem, & diligentiam connotat.*

Church, he keeps it night and day; now night and day divide time: from all which we may see, that the Church is the special object of the providential care of Christ, the Church is his special charge, so his care is answerable towards, or over it, he exercises a most exact providential care towards or over his own Family. And here we may further observe, that as the work of Providence is put into the hand of Christ; so he employes the Angels as his Ministers in the administration thereof, *he maketh his Angels spirits, and his Ministers a flame of fire*, Heb. 1.7. according to their essences and natures, so he employs them as his Servants and Ministers, in managing the work of Providence put into his hands; hence as the Church is the object of his special providential care, so the Angels perform their Ministry with a special respect to, and for the good and benefit of it; hence said to be sent forth to minister for them, *who shall be heirs of Salvation*, Heb. 1. 14. though they serve Christ in the whole work of Providence, yet they have their service, and Ministry especially assigned them, with respect to the good and benefit of the Church, and the particular members thereof, as those that are to be heirs of Salvation; now the Infant-seed of Believers being rightful members of the visible Church, or body of Christ, have the wings of his special providence stretched over them, and have a joyned interest in this service, and Ministry of Angels with the adult members; yea at least, as some, if not most of our best Expositors understand that passage of our Lord Christ in Mat. 18. 10. Infants have a more special interest in their Ministry, their states incapacifying them to take any care of themselves are more especially committed to the charge of Angels; *Take heed sayes our Lord Christ, that ye despise*

spise not one of these little ones : for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do alwayes behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven : by these little ones, are understood little Children, if not alone intended, yet as included and comprehended, they have their Angels, that in Heaven behold the face of God in Heaven, that is, stand alwayes ready to receive commands from God, for their guidance in their service and ministration unto these little ones, to whose care and charge they are committed, *Videre faciem Patris, id est, astare Deo tanquam Regi observantes ejus nutum, ut capessant ipsius mandata de ipsis emittendis ad custodiam puerorum,* saith Piscator :

\* But whether we are to understand our Lord Christ as speaking of little ones in a literal and proper sense or no ; yet that his providential care exercised towards , or over his Church or Family, does extend to them in common with the rest of the members thereof, is sufficiently evident from the universality of that phrase, *he keepeth Israel* ; none that appertain to his *Israel* are from under His care, or excluded from the service or ministration of the Angels, and surely this is no little benefit, that the Seed of Believers have by their membership in the visible Church, they are under that special providential care he exercises over his own house : but for the further clearing up of this, the resolution of two or three questions may be necessary.

First, Whether this Providential care of Christ over his Church be extended equally and alike to all that are visible members of it, or whether he hath not

\* Vide Bulling. in loco, Junius his *Irenicum Meditatio* in Ps. 121.2. Gerhard de Baptismo, Mr. Perkins, Doct. Pri-deux in their Sermons upon this place, &c.

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a peculiar respect to election, and a real work of  
Grace upon the heart, and consequently, seeing we  
deny Infants, as such to have a real work of Grace up-  
on their hearts, and affirm that there is an election of  
Grace among them, unto which some do, others do  
not appertain, whether this providential care of Christ  
be not appropriated only to the Elect among them?

*Answ.* In the resolution of this question, several  
things might be considered, which yet I shall waive and  
shall only observe, that the Angels, whom our Lord  
Christ employs as his Servants and Ministers in the  
work of Providence, do act in their ministration,  
either according to a more general commission and  
charge they have received, or else according to parti-  
cular commands relating to the good and benefit of  
each particular person, *hic & nunc*; and that An-  
gels do act according to a more general commission, as  
well as according to particular commands they receive  
from Christ, for the good and benefit of his Church,  
is not only consonant to reason, but may be eviden-

\* *Ministerium Angelorum est duplex, ordinarium, & extraordinarium,* Janii Eccles. cap. 4.  
pag. 1548.

cenced from Scripture: and hence our  
Divines distinguish of their Min-  
istry; \* it is either, say they, ordi-  
nary or extraordinary; their or-  
dinary Ministry is, that they per-  
form by virtue, and in pursuance  
of their more general commission;

their extraordinary Ministry is that they perform in  
obedience to, and in pursuance of particular com-  
mands and directions they recieve from Christ, whe-  
ther relating to the Church in general, or any part of  
it in this or that nation, or any particular member.

Now suppose we grant, that Angels have many par-  
ticular commands relating to the good of the Elect,  
beyond

beyond what they have relating to the good of the Non-elect, yet, so far as they perform their Ministry according to their more general commission, they have an equal respect to all, without consideration had to election, or non-election, which are secrets to them as well as to us ; yea it may be further observed, that our Lord Christ himself, in the exercise of this his providential care over his Church, hath a greater respect to the Non-elect Infant members, ( I may add to the Non-elect adult, supposing their ways and actions do not openly proclaim the Hypocrisie of their hearts ) than he hath to those that are wholly Aliens (whether Infants, or adult) to the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and answerably does give many particular directions to his Angels relating to their good, beyond what he gives relating to the good of those that are, as the Apostle speaks, without : the truth of what is now affirmed is established upon a twofold ground.

1. First the ordinary way of Christ's dealing with men, especially in his outward dispensations towards them ; he deals with them according to what they are, or appear to be, not according to what he fore-sees they will be, or will do ; hence sayes the Lord by the Prophet *Azariah*, to *Asa*, *Judah* and *Benjamin*, *the Lord is with you, while you be with him*, 2 Chron. 15. 2. Though there might be, as doubtless there were, many whose hearts were not sound nor upright with God, yet this promise is made to them in general, that while they should keep with God in the observation of his commands, he would be with them.

2. Secondly, The other ground, upon which what hath been affirmed is established, is the indefiniteness of the Apostle's expression, *Heb. 1. 14.* Where speak-

speaking of the Angels, *are they not, saith he, ministering spirits, sent forth for the good of them that shall be heirs of Salvation?* The Angels minister unto men, as considered and eyed under that notion, *viz.* as heirs of Salvation ; the Apostle speaketh not of them as elect, nor yet absolutely as Believers ; \* *Vide Doctor Owen in loco.* \* their Election is secret, hid with God, the truth of their Faith may not

be known to Angels, it is God alone that so searches as perfectly to know the hearts of men, and what their states are ; hence the Angels minister to the heirs of Salvation as appearing so to them. Now Infants, during their Infant-state, are visibly heirs of Salvation, or visibly appear to be such who shall be heirs of Salvation, as may further appear hereafter. And answerably the Angels in pursuance of their general commission do minister to them, as eying them under that notion, *viz.* as heirs of Salvation ; so that though I deny not, but elect Infants may have a more full benefit by this special providential care than our Lord Christ exercises over his own Family, than the Non-elect have : yet this I say, that the Infant-seed of Believers in general, or universally, being admitted visible members of his Family, and appearing as heirs of Salvation, before they have made a forfeiture of their Covenant-interest, have an equal interest in the service, and ministration of Angels, so far as that is performed according to their more general commission, with the rest of the members thereof, besides many particular services done by the Angels, according to particular directions from Christ, beyond what the rest of mankind, yet strangers to the Covenants of Promise, have.

2. Whether this special providential care of Christ  
be

be not extended to Elect-Infants, born unto unbelievers; as well as to those that are visible members of his Church, and if so, then such would have the same benefit, that they have being admitted.

*Answ.* It is not to be doubted, but that our Lord Christ knows who are his by election, as well as by vocation, and that he hath a respect to them as such, antecedent to their Union with him, and admission into the Church visible ; but yet let these three things be considered.

1. First, That how far, or in what sense soever the providential care of Christ is extended to, and exercised over such, yet supposing the Infant-seed of Believers excluded from his Church and Family, that his care would be but particular, and not universal, it would reach only to the elect, and not to all their Seed, and consequently the priviledge of the Seed of Believers would be greatly narrowed and lessened beyond what now it is, yea, the Seed of Believers, as such, would have no benefit by the special providential care of Christ, beyond what the Seed of others have, neither could their Parents take any comfort in, or make any improvement of the consideration of their Seed's injoyment of this priviledge, in as much as they should not then injoy it as their Seed, but only as elected, and who or whether any of their Seed were elected, each particular Believer would be uncertain.

2. Secondly, The case of Infants and of the adult in this regard is one and the same, no doubt, but our Lord Christ hath a respect to the Elect, whether in their infancy, or as grown up, beyond what he hath to others ; and yet we find the Church, and that as visible, greatly magnified, yea even admired on the account of this priviledge, *Ob Israel who is like unto thee,*

thee, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help ? Deut. 33. 29. It is primarily meant of this providential care that our Lord Christ exerciseth over his Church as visible, and what is said of the Church in general, is true of, and applicable to each particular member, as sharing in the common privileges of the whole, and therefore

3. Thirdly, I answer, that neither Infants nor grown persons, though as pertaining to the election of Grace, have an equal interest in, and benefit by this care of Christ, while *strangers to the Commonwealth of Israel*, with those that are actual members of that Commonwealth ; it is *Israel*, that the excellency of God is over, Psal. 68. 34. This will clearly appear in the case of *Ruth* the Moabitess, that she appertained to the election of Grace, will not, as I suppose, be questioned by any, and yet shall we think she had the same benefit by this special providential care of God over his Church, antecedent to her coming to trust under the wing of the God of Israel, as Boaz speaks in Ruth 2. 12. that she had, after she was actually come ? what benefit then had she in that respect, by her forsaking her own people, and joyning her self with the people of God ? And as I said the case of Infants and of grown persons is one and the same, so that this is no small good or benefit that the Infant-seed of Believers have by their admission into the visible Church, above and beyond what the Seed of others that are without do injoy, that thereby they are brought under that special providential care that our Lord Christ does exercise over his Church, Kingdom or Family.

Quest. 3. It may be farther inquired, wherein does the good or benefit of being under this providential

dential care of Christ consist? what difference is put thereby, between the Infant-seed of Believers, and the Infant-seed of others?

*Answ.* To that I shall only say in general, that it is a good and benefit to be under this care of Christ, cannot rationally be doubted of, by any who with their hearts believe, *that God hath raised him up from the dead, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church,* though the effects thereof be not always obvious unto sense. Some indeed have not been ashamed to put the question, *where is the God of Judgment?* not being able to discern any difference in his providential dispensations towards the righteous and the wicked: But will any man, that is initiated in the School of Christ, and hath learned in any measure to walk by Faith, and not by Sense, infer herefrom, that either there is no providential care exercised over the righteous, or that they have no benefit thereby? The non-appearing unto sense of any difference between the Seed of Believers, and the Seed of unbelievers, is no rational ground for any to conclude, either that there is no such special care extended to, or exercised over the former, or that they receive no benefit or advantage thereby, *The ways of God are in the Seas, his paths in the deep Waters; as for his footsteps they are not known,* Psal. 77. 19. How many glorious designs does our Lord Christ carry on for the good of his Family, and the several members thereof, when yet, neither the time when the first foundation of them was laid, nor the various workings of Providence in their accomplishment, is discerned or observed, either by the men of the World, yea, or by Saints themselves? only when they are brought to their intended perfection, they give abundance

dant cause, to those who reap the fruit of them, to admire and say, it was good for them that they ever had a place in that Kingdom or Family, over which is the excellency of that God, who rideth upon the Heaven of Heavens, and whose strength is in the Clouds. Who, that hath any true knowledg of Christ, and hath his senses at all exercised to discern between things that differ, would willingly be removed from under this special providential care of Christ, though it were to be set over the greatest Empire in the World, yea though yet continued under that general providence, that extends to the whole Creation of God?

So that, not to descend to particulars, to be under the special providence of Christ must be granted to be a singular good by all those that will not disclaim Christianity, and avow themselves open Infidels.

Now, I say, the Infant-seed of Believers, as admitted into the visible Church, Kingdom and Family of Christ, are under that special providential care he exercises over it; but now Parents by disclaiming their Seed's interest in the Covenant, and refusing on that account to admit them into the visible Church by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, do, if not absolutely, yet at least what in them lies, deprive them of this priviledge, and leave them under only that general and common providence, that is exercised over the dark places of the earth, that are full of the habitations of cruelty, and oh that men, yea that Christians should become so cruel to the fruit of their own bodies.

C H A P. IV.

The good redounding to the Infant-seed of Believers from their admission into, and membership in the visible Church, Kingdom, or Family of Christ, further opened in a third instance, viz. They stand nigher than the rest of Mankind to, and are the more especial Objects of the Promises of saving Grace. Some of these Promises mentioned. The full Good contained in them unfolded. That the Seed of Believers, as members of the visible Church, do stand nigher than the rest of Mankind to them, fully proved. An exaggeration of Parents evil in rejecting their Childrens Church-membership.

3. Thirdly and especially, the Infant-seed of Believers, as members of the visible Church, stand nigher than the rest of Mankind do to, and answerably are the more especial objects of, the Promises of saving Grace. The Promises I have reference to, are such as these, Isa. 54. 13. Jer. 31. 31. That the very first special or saving Grace, I mean inherent or renewing Grace, whereby the Image of God is renewed in, and reinstamped upon the soul, is originally from God, and not from Man himself, needs no other proof, than the bare recital of those Scrip-

tures that affirm it, *John 3. 3, 7.* compared with *John 1.13. Ephes. 2.8, 10. James 1.17, 18. &c.* That the Promises aforementioned, and unto which I have reference, do contain and hold forth saving Grace, and at least that *Isai. 54. 13.* the very first special or saving Grace, is sufficiently evident from the words themselves; so from the application our Lord Christ makes of that Promise in *John 6. 44, 45.* where we see our Lord Christ applyes thele *teachings of God* to those effectual teachings and drawings of the Father, whereby sinners are brought to him, and which whosoever do injoy, do actually come to him, and shal be raised up by him at the last day; that is, unto Life and Glory. And yet farther, that these Promises I now refer unto, have their accomplishment in New-Testament-times, and that during the present administration, is undeniably secured both by our Lord Christ, and the Apostles interpretation and application of them: compare those forecited Texts with *John 6. 44, 45. Heb. 8. 11.* So that as all special, or saving Grace, especially that first, whereby the soul is drawn and united unto Christ, is originally from God; so these Promises do hold forth and assure that Grace unto some in New-Testament-times, during the present administration of the Covenant of Grace: Now, I say, the Infant-seed of Believers, as incorporated into the visible Church by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, do stand nigher to these Promises than the rest of Mankind do, and are the more especial Objects of them, and consequently they have, and ( were Parents faithful in the discharge of their duty ) would more abundantly have their accomplishment especially among them: But that we may more clearly see, how great

a good and advantage the Seed of Believers in this respect have by their membership in the visible Church, I shall do two things :

1. First, shew more particularly what is the good that is contained in these Promises, and

2. Secondly, prove that the Seed of Believers do stand nigher to them, than the rest of Mankind. To begin with the first, *viz.*

What the good contained in these Promises is : and that is twofold, the former implied and presupposed ; the latter more plainly expressed.

First, the good contained in these Promises is the vouchsafement of such outward means, as are apt and sufficient, according to the ordinary dealings of God with, and his ordinary wayes of working Grace in Men, instrumentally to convey Grace to, and work it in the heart: these means in the general are the outward communication or publication of the Doctrine of Redemption, and Salvation by Christ. The Doctrine of the Gospel, declaring the way of Redemption and Salvation by Christ, as some ways communicated to the understanding, and applyed to the soul, is the means by, and through which God does ordinarily work Grace in those, whose Salvation he intends ; I mean it of such whose capacities admit of their reception of Grace that way. Now when God promises Grace, he implicitly promises the means, by which it may, according to the ordinary way of his dealings with men, be wrought in those intended in the Promises. But before I proceed, it may not be altogether unuseful to remove one objection that may possibly arise in the minds at least of some men.

*Obj.* Possibly it may be said, These Promises seem rather to exclude than include any external means;

for it is expressly said, when these Promises come to have their accomplishment, men shall not teach every one his neighbour, or his brother, saying; know the Lord, they shall be all taught of God, and that shall be the only teaching they shall have, or stand in need of.

*Answ.* To this I shall only say two things.

First, That the Promises of the Covenant of Grace have a gradual accomplishment: they had a lower accomplishment under the first Testament, they have a higher and more full accomplishment under the New, during the present administration: what further intendment they may have, and how accomplished in the ages yet to come, is not without its difficulty to determine: Be sure, in Heaven there shall be no need of outward means: *Promissiones novi fæderis inchoantur in hac vita, impletur autem in vita futura,* Cam. in Heb. 8. 11. And therefore

2. Secondly, These words only note a more abundant pouring forth of the Spirit under the New Te-

stament, beyond what was granted under the first: \* and the meaning is only this, as if the Lord should say, they shall not only be taught of men; but my Spirit shall accompany the teaching of men, by means whereof they shall have my Law put in their minds, and written in their

hearts, and shall know me from the least to the greatest. And that the Spirit of God designed not the exclusion of outward means is sufficiently evident from our Lord Christ's instituting the Gospel-Ministry, at that very time to which these Promises had a direct

\* *Non enim tantum pro non solum frequenter accipitur, sed in altero, quod per adversitatem opponitur, quadam præminentia præ priori intelligitur.* Glass.

reference, and were to have at least a lower accomplishment; the end of which Institution, and the time of its duration, the Apostle expressly declares in *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.* So that though these Promises seem to exclude, yet they do indeed include, such outward means, as whereby according to the ordinary way of God's working in, and upon men, the main good intended in them may be communicated to them. As when God commands any duty from men, that Command requires the due use and improvement of all means necessarily subserving their performance of the duty commanded: so when he promises any good, especially when the Promise is absolute, as I conceive these are, in the promise of that good is included the necessary means of man's enjoyment of it: so that when God promises that all the *Children* of his Church *shall be taught of him*; and that so, as to know him from the greatest to the least; and that he will put his *Laws* in their minds, and write them in their hearts, he does implicitly promise a sufficiency of means, whereby the main Good intended may be communicated to them: and these means in the general, as I have said, are the communication, or publication of the Doctrine of the Gospel, at least so far as is absolutely and simply necessary to the working of a saving work of Grace in the heart. The various ways whereby the Doctrine of the Gospel may be communicated unto men, whether young or old, are not necessary to be insisted upon.

The most proper and ordained way in respect of the Seed of Believers hath been already intimated to be Parental Instruction; though I shall not say, God hath confined himself to that way alone. But let it suffice to know in the general, that in these Prom-

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ses is included the vouchsafement of a sufficiency of means, whereby these spiritual blessings may in an ordinary way be communicated to those designed for their injoyment.

2. Secondly, The main and principal good intended in these Promises is the effectual operations of the Spirit of God in a concurrence with, and by those means, together with their inseparable Effects and Fruits, these Promises, both as at first given forth by those two Prophets, and also as interpreted by Christ and the Apostle *Paul*, evidently intend some good beyond the bare vouchsafement of outward means; for otherwise they would assure of nothing, with reference to the ends whereunto they were given forth, beyond what was injoyed by the people of God under the Old Testament; they had then the *Oracles of God committed to them*, as well as the Church of God now hath; so that it must needs be, some good that is principally intended in these Promises, beyond what was vouchsafed to the Church under the Old-Testament-administration, and which does advance the New-Testament-administration to an excellency, and glory above that of the Old, which can be nothing else, but the more plentiful effusion of the Spirit of God, and his effectual Operations with their inseparable Fruits and Effects, here declared to be the saving knowledg of God, the abiding of the Law in the mind, and its Inscription in the heart. But let that suffice for the good intended in these Promises.

2. Secondly, That the Seed of Believers, as Members of the Church, stand nigher than the rest of Mankind, ( I mean, that are, as the Apostle speaks, without to ) and are the more especial Objects of these Promises : Now this will appear two ways.

I. First,

I. First more generally, from the consideration of the more general Objects of them, and that is the Church, or House of *Israel*, of which the Seed of Believers are Members ; thus in that Isa. 54. 13. *All thy Children shall be taught of God* : whose Children the Prophet speaks of, is evident, as from the Context, so from that discourse of the Apostle in Gal. 4. ult. they are the Children of *Jerusalem* which is from above, that is the Gospel-Church; and that it is meant of the Gospel-Church as visible, is evident from Isa. 54. 11. It is the Church tossed to and fro with Tempest, that is, Afflictions, Persecutions, &c. which are only compatible to the Church as visible. Now they are the Children of the Church, as so considered, that are the Objects of this Promise, they shall be taught of God, and that so, as to know him from the least to the greatest. Some indeed have understood by these Children, the natural Children of the Church, or of the Members of the Church : and though I doubt not, but that the Holy Ghost has a considerable respect unto them, yet I conceive not merely as such, but as Members of the visible Church, it being usual in Scripture to speak of the Church collectively taken, under the notion of a Mother, and the several Members under the notion of her Children : and that we are so to understand it in this place, is evident both from the Context, and that discourse of the Apostle before mentioned ; so that let it be granted that this Promise does not appertain to the Seed of Believers merely as such ; yet as the Covenant of Grace is extended to them, and they, by the Application of

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the Token thereof are admitted into the visible  
Church, so it does appertain, yea in a special man-  
ner appertains to them: so again in that *Heb. 8. x i.* the  
Covenant wherein these Promises of putting the Law  
*in the mind, and writing it in the heart,* are contain-  
ed, as made with the House of Israel, and by House of  
Israel, we are again to understand the visible Church,  
that *cerin* House being frequently applyed to the  
visible, but never, as I remember, to the invisible  
Church, at least merely as such: Now the Seed of  
Believers being of this House of Israel, they have a joynct  
interest in this Covenant, and the Promises contained  
in it, with the whole House, and answerably stand  
nigher to, and are the more especial Objects of these  
Promises, than the rest of Mankind are, who are not  
of this House of Israel. Only let it be observed, that  
though the Church or House of Israel be the proper  
Object of these Promises, yet I would not be under-  
stood, as excluding all others from partaking of the  
good contained in them: for though the actual enjoy-  
ment of that good be peculiar and proper to those  
that are of the Church or House of Israel; yet by the  
very vouchsafement of it, others that were without  
are converted and brought into it: those that God  
hath designed a place in his House, are effectually  
taught by him, and by means thereof, are brought  
into it: But though God does vouchsafe the good  
contained in these Promises to Forraigners as the means  
whereby they are brought into his House; yet they  
in a peculiar and special manner belong to his House,  
or to such as are already in his House, and conse-  
quently to the Seed of Believers as Members thereof.

Obj. But possibly some may say, If so be God hath  
made the Covenant with the Church as visible, and  
therein

therein hath promised not only the outward means of Grace, but the effectual operations of the Spirit in a concurrence with those means ; and consequently saving Grace as the inseparable Fruit of those operations, and the Seed of Believers have this Covenant, with the Promises thereof extended unto them in common with the adult Members of the Church ; then it may seem, either that God fails in making good his Covenant, or else we must say, they are all savingly taught of God, and have true Grace wrought in their hearts ; and if so, we must necessarily hold falling from Grace.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* This Objection I have in part obviated already in a former Treatise ; yet let me speak a little more distinctly to it at present : and for a more full answer to it, we must distinguish of the Covenant thus ; It is either made with the Church in general, or with particular Persons, and answerably there are some Promises appertaining to the Church in general as a collective Body, and are to be interpreted, and understood in an indefinite notion ; but then there are other Promises appertaining to particular Persons, and are to be understood in a definite notion : and here we may observe a threefold difference between the Covenant as made with the Church in general, and the Promises of it as so made, and as made with particular Persons, and the Promises of it as so made.

¶ First, There is a difference in respect of the good covenanted, or promised as thus : the Covenant, as made with the Church in general, contains Promises of the first saving or special Grace, as the Promises I have at present reference unto ; these appertain to the Covenant as made with the Church in general : but now the Covenant as made with particular persons contains

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contains no Promises of the first Grace, but only of consequential Grace, such as the pardon of sin, the indwelling presence of the Spirit, and the like; and does presuppose the first Grace already wrought as the condition of it on Man's part, as in the case of the Adult; or else does presuppose the condition of it, some other way performed, as in the case of the Infants seed of Believers, viz. by the Faith of their Parents; v. 2. Secondly, There is a difference in respect of the interest that Persons have in, and title they have to it, and answerably in the way and manner of God's performing of it, or giving the good promised in it: as it is made with the Church in general, so none have a particular actual interest in, or title to it, as taken severally by themselves, they have only a more general interest in, and title to it as Members of that Collective Body with which it is made; but now, as made with particular Persons, each one, with whom it is so made, hath an actual interest in, and title to it, as taken apart by themselves, without respect had to their relation to the Church in general; and answerably as it is made with the Church in general, God hath reserved a liberty to himself to give and answerably does make it good, or give the good promised to particular Persons, according to the good pleasure of his Will, in a compliance with his eternal Purposes, and Decrees. What may be objected against this, from the universality of the expressions, they shall be all taught <sup>in the old Testament</sup>: of God, hath been answered elsewhere, \* Infant Baptism <sup>to which I must refer the Reader</sup> from Heaven. p. 111. \* But as it is made with particular Persons, so it does infallibly secure p. 108, 109, 110, <sup>8</sup> the good covenanted and promised to each in particular, upon supposition

tion of a non-failure on their part in the performance of the duties required.

3. Thirdly, There is a difference in respect of the tenour of the Covenant and Promises thereof. As made with, or to the Church in general they are absolute; but as made with or to particular Persons, conditional. Yet let me say, that though the Promises of the Covenant, as made with the Church in general, are absolute as to the Church, as so considered, that is, no Condition is imposed upon the Church in general, or as collectively considered, in order to God's making good these Promises; yet that hinders not, but that somewhat of duty may be required of particular Members in order to their own or theirs enjoying the good promised, in which failing, either themselves, or theirs may be denied that good, though yet the Promises shall have their accomplishment; and others shall enjoy the good of them, though they do not. But to return, having then distinguished of the Covenant, and the Promises of it, the answer to the foregoing objection is this: That the Promises under our present consideration do appertain to the Covenant as made with the Church in general, and answerably are to be interpreted, and understood in an indefinite notion, and have their accomplishment among those to whom in general they do appertain according to the good pleasure of God, in a compliance with his eternal Purposes and Decrees.

Promises of a like nature with these frequently occur in Scripture, the consideration of which, may farther clear up what hath been said. See *Mark 16. 17, 18. John 14. 12.* which Promises, though they may seem to be definite as made to each particular Believer, yet are to be understood indefinitely, and have their accom-

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accomplishment, in that some have had a power of working Miracles, or in that such a power hath been exerted in the Church, though possibly not in the fulness of it, by any one particular Believer: So in our present case, the Covenant as made with, and Promises as made to the Church or House of *Israel*, as a Collective Body being indefinite, they do not infallibly secure the good contained in them to every individual Member, only such a good to the Church in general, and answerably every individual Member stands nigher to, and is a more especial object of them, than those that are without.

¶ And yet for the farther clearing up and confirming of what hath been said, we may observe, that that twofold Good before mentioned, intended in these Promises, is distinctly promised to the Church as a Collective body.

¶ 1. First, For the outward means of Grace thus, in that Psal. 147. 17. *He hath shewed his Judgments unto Jacob, and his Statutes unto Israel: he hath not done so to every Nation.* I conceive we are to take these words, not barely as Historical of what God did for the Church of the Jews, but Promissory, wherein God does graciously ingage himself, to vouchsafe such outward means to his Church throughout all ages, as shall be sufficient through the concurring operations of the Spirit to convey the saving knowledg of himself in Christ to, and work Grace in the hearts of the several Members thereof; however, this seems evident, that the *Psalmist* speaks not of God's shewing his Judgments to *Jacob*, and Statutes to *Israel* as a Priviledge peculiar and proper to the Jewish Church, but as the Church of God, and answerably declares what is one of the great Priviledges of the

Church

Church throughout all ages, *viz.* to enjoy the *Oracles of God*, or the outward means of Grace: And hence it is, that the Apostle tells the *Jews*, as then not unchurched, that *it was necessary*, or of necessity,  $\alpha\omega\sigma\omega\tau\omega\tau\omega$ , that the *Gospel* should be first preached *unto them*, *Acts 13. 46.* and why was this necessary or of necessity, but because they, yet appertaining to the visible Church, should, while they so continued, have a sufficiency of outward means, whereby the saving Knowledge of God in Christ, and a work of Grace might be communicated to, and wrought in them, God having granted that to his Church as one of her great Privileges here upon earth.

2. Secondly, For the effectual operations of the Spirit, with their inseparable Fruits and Effects: and thus our Lord Christ hath promised the constant and perpetual presence of the Spirit *in*, and with his Church, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, John 14. 16.* We are not to understand this as a Promise to particular Believers; though in whomsoever the Spirit of God doth dwell, he dwells and abides for ever; yet of that indwelling presence of the Spirit in the hearts of particular Believers I conceive our Lord Christ does not here speak, but of his presence in, and with his Church in general, in which sense Christ is said *to walk in the midst of the golden Candlesticks*: Now the great end of the Spirit's presence in, and with the Church is to make effectual by his internal operations the external means of Grace for the ends whereunto they are vouchsafed; so that we see the Promises of saving Grace, both of the external means whereby that Grace is wrought, and of the Spirit by whose operations those means are made effectual,

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effectual, do in a particular and special manner apper-  
tain to the visible Church, and consequently the Seed  
of Believers being Members thereof, they must needs  
stand nigher to, and be more especially the Objects  
of those Promises, than the rest of Mankind, who  
are *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel*: and surely  
it can be no small benefit, or advantage to stand in  
so nigh a capacity to these Promises, to be of that  
Body, or Family to whom they do belong, though  
the good contained in them be not infallibly secured  
to every individual. To be of any Body Politick,  
Corporation or Society, unto which any peculiar  
Grants do belong, is looked upon as a great Privi-  
legd and Advantage, though the Good granted be  
not infallibly secured to every individual Member;  
yet every one in particular is in a nigher and greater  
capacity to enjoy that Good, than those that are not  
of such a Body, Corporation, or Sociery: the case is  
the same here.

2. But secondly, and more particularly: And thus  
we shall find, that these Promises do yet in a more  
especial and peculiar manner belong to that part of,  
or species of Members in the visible Church that con-  
sists in the Seed of Believers: the Adult are supposed  
already to have the first Grace; and therefore, these  
Promises, at least as they hold forth the first Grace,  
have a more especial respect to the Seed of Believers:  
Hence we shall find Promises of that twofold Good  
before mentioned expressly and particularly made  
unto them: thus Isa. 44. 4, 5. Sayes the Lord, I will  
*pour out my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my blessing upon thy Off-spring.* Seed and Off-spring here are synoni-  
mous terms, they intend the same Subjects, and by  
both the natural Seed of Believers is intended, as  
is evident, in as much as that term Off-spring is never  
used

used in any other sense, than to signify natural Children or Posterity, and by Spirit and Blessing the same good is intended, only the latter term is explicative of the former, *I will pour out my Spirit and Blessing,* is as much as to say, I will pour out my Spirit, who, as poured out upon, shall be a blessing to them; and in this promise of the Spirit is implied the vouchsafement of the outward means, through and by which God does pour out his Spirit upon his People. The Doctrine of the Gospel as some way communicated unto men, is the ministration of the Spirit to them;

*2 Cor. 3. 8.* And hence the Promise of the Spirit does necessarily imply, and include in it, such a communication of the Gospel, as through which, according to the ordinary way of God's dealing with men, the Spirit may be ministred to those to whom the Promise doth appertain: and as the Spirit is here expressly promised to the Seed of Believers, and the outward means of Grace implied therein, so in *Isa. 59. ult.* this two-fold good is expressly, and *in terminis* promised, *My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed's Seed, from henceforth, and for ever, saith the Lord.* It is a promise made to the universal Church, and declares the way, and means how, and whereby God does uphold, maintain and perpetuate his Church in the World, it is by vouchsafing his Word, or the outward means of Grace, and his Spirit in a concurrence with them, to his People, and their Seed successively from one generation to another. To those that consider the nature of these Promises, or that they are to be interpreted and understood not in a definite, but in an indefinite notion, and do impartially

partially observe the way of God's procedure in the dispensation of his Grace towards men, any endeavours to vindicate the Faithfulness of God in their performance would be needless and superfluous; for though some have contemned that observation that others have made, viz. that that Seed that God hath reserved out of the posterity of fallen man to serve him, is in a considerable measure raised out of the Families of the Faithful, yet it is indeed of great weight, and so evident to unbyassed Observers, that it may be no little confirmation of the sense and meaning now given of these Promises, and is an abundant vindication of the Truth and Faithfulness of God in them.

And as it hath in all ages past given, so still gives him the just Name and Repute of a God *keeping Covenant and Mercy for ever*. But to put a close to this third Benefit that the Seed of Believers have by their Membership in the visible Church, I say they are thereby brought nigher to the Promises of saving Grace, than the rest of Mankind are: they are of that Collective Body or Society of men unto whom these Promises do in the general appertain; and not only so, but are that special part of, or species of Members in that Body or Society, to whom these Promises in a more especial manner do belong: they are nigh to the Promises as they are of the visible Church, but they are yet nigher, as they are specified and pointed out to be the Persons peculiarly intended in them: and according to their nighness to these Promises, so especially, when Parents are faithful in their duty towards them, is their injoyment of the good promised. How rarely is it found when Parents with *Abraham* are faithful in instructing, and commanding their

*Children*

Children to walk in way of the Lord ; but if not all, yet some, ( though sometimes more sometimes fewer, according to the number they are blessed with ) are found through the blessing of God accompanying of those instructions walking in these ways ; yea, how many instances might be given of Parents so performing their duty, who can walk in the World, as in a strange land with comfortable hopes that all theirs are heirs with them of the same Promises ?

Now then, how strange is it that believing Parents should have their understandings so far darkened, and their Judgments so far blinded, to make that which sometimes was the Gentiles, and is now the Jewes misery, ( viz. to be far from God, and strangers to the Covenants of Promise ) their choice, though not for themselves, yet for theirs ; and should, what in them lies, set them at the utmost distance from those Promises that are the great grounds of hope to fallen Man, that he may obtain an exchange of his Sin and Misery for Grace and Glory, and leave them to take their Lot among those that are afar off ? We may well call to the Heavens to be astonished at this, and to the Earth to be moved out of its place. But to pass from this first Head of Benefits accruing to the Seed of Believers : From the application of the token of the Covenant to them they have admission into, and become Members of the Church visible ; and God by commanding the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed of his People, speaks to them with respect to their Seed, as Jacob to Joseph with reference to his two Sons, *Bring your Children near to me that I may bless them* : bring them into my House and Family, and as they then shall have an interest in all the Prayers put up for it ; so they shall have the special providen-

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tial care of my Son over them, he shall give his Angels a charge concerning them, they shall come into a higher capacity to enjoy Grace promised, than the rest of Mankind ; and be you faithful in your duties, and I will be faithful in my Promises. Now shall any reject such a Gracious Invitation, how justly may Children curse the day they were ever brought forth by such Parents ?

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CHAP.

## C H A P. V.

The second Good or Benefit accruing to the Seed of Believers by the Application of the Token of the Covenant proposed, viz. They have thereby the Covenant, with the Promises thereof appertaining to them, ratified sealed and confirmed. An Enquiry made, whether the Covenant and Promises are entred with, and made to the Seed of Believers, definitely or only indefinitely. The various judgments of Pædo-Baptists about it. That they are entred and made definitely, proved two wayes. First, In the instance of Abraham's Seed immediatly proceeding from his own Loyns : where two Reasons are offered. Secondly, It is further proved by three Reasons respecting both Abraham's and all other Believers Seed. The forementioned good accruing to the Seed of Believers opened in the resolution of two Questions. The former proposed, viz. What the Token of the Covenant has reference unto. That it has a twofold reference shewed. First, To the Covenant as abstractly and absolutely considered. The thing ratified, sealed and confirmed by it,

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as considered in that its reference, determined to be their Covenant. That the necessary result of which is proved by two Arguments to be their discharge from the guilt and condemning power of Original sin, and that both Originans and Originatum.

2. **T**He second Good or Benefit, that the Seed of Believers have by the Application of the Token of the Covenant, is this, viz. They have thereby the Covenant with the Promises thereof appertaining to them sealed and confirmed to them. But before I proceed to a particular unfolding of this Good or Benefit, it may not be unuseful, but seems necessary, that I should give a brief account of the different apprehensions of Pædo-Baptists themselves about the nature of the Covenant and Promises, as entered with, and made to the Infant-seed of Believers; for that they are not all of one mind and judgment about that must be granted: And according to their different apprehensions about the nature of the Covenant and Promises, they are differently persuaded as to the Good accruing to Infants by their Covenant-interest, and their having the Token of the Covenant applyed to them, which I shall also briefly take notice of as I go along.

1. First, Some conceive that the Covenant is entered with the Seed of Believers only indefinitely, and answerably that the Promises appertaining to them are to be interpreted and understood in an indefinite notion; that is, as having a respect to them as generally and collectively considered, but not made to any of them in particular. And of those that go this way

way, some conceive that the Covenant and Promises appertain only to the Elect, and secure to them only the future enjoyment of all the saving Fruits and Benefits purchased by Christ ; but do not necessarily convey to, or confer upon them any of those Fruits or Benefits for the present, and consequently, that by the Application of the Token of the Covenant, only *Jus ad rem*, not *Jus in re* is sealed and confirmed : But others conceive that as the Covenant and Promises thereof have only an indefinite respect to the Seed of Believers, so that at least some of them have those saving Benefits and Blessings actually granted to and conferred upon them, and consequently that they are actually regenerated, and have a full and compleat Union with Christ, the Remission of sins, the Love and Favour of God, &c. And some having these Benefits and Blessings actually conferred upon them in their Infancy, we are to presume it may be so with each one in particular ; and on that account are to apply the Token of the Covenant to them universally. And this Opinion, could it be clearly proved from Scripture, would free the Controversie about Infant Baptism from many difficulties it must be confess it is otherwise attended with : And on that account I should readily comply with it : but for the reasons after to be given, I cannot, but at present lay it aside *cum pace tantorum virorum.*

2. Secondly, others conceive that the Covenant is entered with the Seed of Believers definitely, and answerably that the Promises appertaining to them are to be interpreted and understood in a definite notion ; and consequently, that as the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham*, did extend to *Ishmael*, as well as to *Isaac*, so is still continued to all Believers.

and each one of their Seed in particular. And some of these that go this way conceive, that all the Infants of Believers have true Grace, in particular true Faith, wrought in them either antecedent to the Application of the Token of the Covenant, or at the time of its Application, if not by, yet in a concurrence with it. But this opinion necessarily inferring a possibility to lose, and fall from the truth of Grace, is rejected by the generality of Protestants, especially that bear the denomination of *Calvinists*.

Yet some grant, yea assert some kind of supernatural Operations of the Spirit to antecede, at least accompany the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, whereby at least *a posse agere*, or some dispositions facilitating their saving acting of Grace are wrought. But others distinguish of the Covenant: it is say they, *internum, aut externum*, it is either Internal, or External: by the Internal Covenant, they seem to mean the Covenant as really and truly entred with the Elect, ensuring to them Grace and Glory: by the External Covenant they seem to mean the Covenant as visibly appearing to be made with Men, whether Infants, or Adult, when as it is not indeed really entred mutually between God and them. This latter way of God's entring Covenant with Men, whether young or old, is expressed by some, by entring Covenant with them in or according to an Ecclesiastical Dispensation, that is, as they express themselves in a visible Church-way.

Again others, and sometimes the same Men distinguish of the Good contained in and conveyed by the Promises of the Covenant appertaining to the Seed of Believers: it is, say they, either Spiritual and Saving or else only External and Ecclesiastical; as Member

ship in the visible Church, a right to the outward Ordinances and Priviledges of the Church, and the like. And they conceive that the Covenant, as containing saving Spiritual Mercies, only appertains to the Elect; but, as containing External Ecclesiastical Priviledges, it appertains to all the Seed of Believers: hence they call it, as entred with them, a Covenant of Priviledges. This latter Opinion concerning the definiteness of the Covenant I take to be according to truth, though to distinguish either of the Covenant, or the good contained in it, as entred with, or extended to Infants, I see no ground, neither do I think it is at all necessary; but I say, as to the nature of the Covenant, I doubt not, but that it is entred with, and extended to the Infant-seed of Believers definitely, and answerably that the Promises appertaining to them are to be interpreted and understood in a definite notion, as appertaining equally and alike to each one in particular: I speak of the Covenant and Promises, as entred with and made to the Seed of Believers merely as such. There are, it's true, some Promises of the Covenant appertaining unto them, which are to be interpreted and understood in an indefinite notion, as has been afore declared; but those appertain not to them merely as the Seed of such Parents, but as Members of the visible Church, as was there shewed: But now for the Covenant as extended to them as the Seed of believing Parents, so it is extended to them definitely, and answerably the Promises of the Covenant appertaining to them are to be interpreted, and understood in a definite notion. This I have in part proved already, yet I shall add somewhat more for the further confirmation of

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it. And it may be, as I conceive, proved two ways.

1. In the Instance of *Abraham's* natural Children, proceeding immediatly from his own Loyns.

2. By some further Reasons equally respecting *Abraham's*, and all other Believers Infant-seed.

1. Let us see it in that particular instance of *Abraham's* Infant-seed ; and thus I shall only offer these two reasons, beyond what I have given in the Treatise forecited.

1. Unless the Covenant had been entred definitely with *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediatly proceeding from His own Loyns, there had been no rational ground for *Ishmael's* Circumcision. That Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant is expressly asserted by the Lord himself ; and answerably that the Application of it did presuppose the Subjects to whom it was to be applyed to be in Covenant, at least according to visible appearance, or according to a rational Judgment of Charity, is above any rational doubt evident. This I have also proved elsewhere. But now unless the Covenant did extend unto *Ishmael* in particular, there was no appearance at all of his being in Covenant, but an undenyable discovery of the contrary, and that from the mouth of God himself : By promising *Abraham* a Son of *Sarah*, and that, as the Mother of that Son, she should be a Mother of Nations, he did set aside *Ishmael*, and exclude him from the number of those that should inherit the Good promised, and was so understood by *Abraham*, which was the ground of his prayer for him, and is accordingly interpreted by the Apostle, in that Rom. 9.1. Hence had not the Covenant extended to *Ishmael* in particular, there had been no ground for the Application of Circumcision to him, especially under that

notion,

notion, *viz.* As the Token of the Covenant, under which notion it was yet applyed to him; he could not be lookt upon as an Heir designed to inherit the Good of the Promise now made; much less to have true Grace already wrought in him, seing he was excluded by God himself from inheriting the Good promised. The rationality of God's extending the Covenant to him, and granting the Token of it, when yet he intended not that he should inherit the Good promised, is no way difficult to declare, but is not necessary here to be insisted upon. It is enough to our present purpose that he was in particular taken into Covenant as well as *Isaac*, and as the Covenant was entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed; so it is entred with all Believers, and their natural Seed.

2. This is further evident, because under this term *Seed* in the Promise, *Abraham*'s mystical Seed was intended and included with his natural; this the Apostle expressly declares, *Gal. 3. 16*. Hence look under what notion the Covenant was made with the one species or sort of his *Seed*, in the same notion it was made with the other: but now it is undenyable, that, as made with his mystical Seed, it is to be interpreted and understood definitely, and answerably was so made with his natural Seed. We may suppose all *Abraham*'s mystical Seed, as well as his natural, then actually existing (as in the sight of God they were, to whom things future are present,) and now standing with *Abraham* in the presence of God, and apprehend him as speaking to him with reference to them all, *I will be thy God, and the God of all these that are thy Seed*: Now how can we without warrant from Scripture, as here we have none, interpret or understand him as promising to one species or sort of this

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this Seed of *Abraham* definitely, that he would be a  
God to them ; but to the other only indefinitely : So  
that as without great prejudice to the Faith and Com-  
fort of Saints we cannot interpret the Promise as ex-  
tending unto them only in a definite notion : So not  
without great violence to the Text can we interpret it  
as intending *Abraham's* natural Seed any otherwise  
than we do as intending his mystical Seed. Hence  
whatever difficulties may be supposed to attend our  
expounding the Promise in a definite notion as exten-  
ding to the natural Seed of Believers, the same diffi-  
culties did attend it as so made to *Abraham's* natural  
Seed ; and yet that it was so made to them, seems evi-  
dent from the reasons now given, taken in conjunc-  
tion with what has been formerly argued.

2. But secondly let me yet further offer some Rea-  
sons equally respecting *Abraham's*, and all other Be-  
lievers Seed : and I shall not produce all those Reasons  
which offer themselves to serve in the design in hand ;  
I shall only single out these three, which I conceive  
sufficient to confirm what is now asserted.

1. If the Promises of the Covenant were only  
made indefinitely to the Seed of Believers, then there  
would be in variety of instances an absolute failure on  
God's part in the performance of them : This appears  
thus, as indefinite Promises do not infallibly secure  
the Good contained in them to every individual Per-  
son to whom in common with others they do apper-  
tain : So they do infallibly secure that Good, at least  
to some one, if not more, of those to whom in general  
they are made. Suppose a man come to another and  
say, I will do good, or I will be bountiful to you and  
to your Children ; suppose he should do good or be  
bountiful according to the utmost intent of the pro-  
mise

mise only to the man himself, but wholly neglect, or do no good at all to any one of his Children ; he would hardly be accounted a man faithful to his Promise : the Promise being only an indefinite Promise, would not its tense oblige him to do good or extend his bounty to every individual Child, yet to some one or more it would. But now that all Believers have some one or more of their Seed immediatly proceeding from their own Loyns partaking with them in the Spiritual and saving Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, I suppose cannot be affirmed ; the contrary is too evident in several instances ; and how God with respect to such can be said to be a God keeping Covenant, I cannot apprehend, supposing the Promises be only indefinite.

2. If the Promises appertaining to the Seed of Believers were only indefinite, then they would pertain to them when Adult, yea, let their ways and practices be what they will, as well as while in their Infancy ; and answerably it may seem they would have the same right to the Token of the Covenant then, that they have in their Infant-state. That the Promises would equally and alike appertain to them when Adult, as when Infants, yea let their ways and practices be what they will, must as I conceive be necessarily granted : for they appertain to them either as the Seed of such Parents, or as performing the condition of the Covenant themselves : not the latter, for then none of the Seed of Believers would have an interest in them till themselves had Grace ; and consequently Grace would not be given in a pursuance of the Promises, but must precede their interest in them : and therefore they must needs appertain to them as the Seed of such Parents ; and consequently must necessarily

sarily appertain to them while they are such, which they are when grown up, as well as when Infants, be their lives and conversations what they will: and while the Promises appertain to them, especially while they visibly and apparently appertain to them, they seem evidently to have a right to the Token of the Covenant.

*Obj.* And if any shall say, that will not follow; for the Promises of the Covenant may indefinitely appertain to those, who yet by their wickedness may forfeit their right to the Token of the Covenant, in as much as their right to it does suppose them to have the truth of Grace.

*Answ.* To that I would say two things.

1. That I conceive, that it is interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof that gives right to the Token: *Be Baptized, for the Promise is to you and to your Children*, saith the Apostle, *Act 2. 38, 39.* He seems evidently to ground his Exhortation to them to be Baptized, upon their interest in the Promises. But for this see more in my first Treatise concerning Infant-Baptism, *Pag. 263. &c.*

2. That in respect of the Seed of Believers, supposing the Promise indefinitely appertaining to them, it may be charitably hoped they may have the truth of Grace, and consequently a real Union with Christ, though greatly apostatizing from the ways of Grace and Holiness, and at present walking in the ways of sin and ungodliness: This hope may be rationally grounded upon the Promise appertaining to them (I speak upon that supposition, that they do appertain to them indefinitely, and that God in a pursuance of them does so frequently work Grace in the hearts of the Seed of his People, as is a rational ground for the

Application of the Token of the Covenant to them universally in their Infancy with respect to Grace already wrought ). taken in conjunction with the indubitable experiences of all ages, that those who have a real work of Grace may greatly apostatize from the ways of Grace and Holiness, and sometimes be found walking, and that for a great while ( how long 'tis hard to say ) in the ways of sin and ungodliness, is past all rational doubt in variety of instances ; as that of *Solomon* and others. And if so be this supposition, that God has wrought Grace in this or that Infant, be a sufficient ground to apply the Token of the Covenant to them in their Infancy ; why may not the same Judgment of Charity be exercised towards the same Persons, as grown up, though at present greatly apostatized from the ways of Grace and Holiness, and supposing the Promises alike appertaining to them, as they did in their Infancy, and the same Judgment of Charity to be exercised towards them as may be exercised during their Infant-state ? Though it be granted their case be more doubtful, yet I say it will be hardly proved by Scripture that they ought not to have the Token of the Covenant applyed to them ; and yet to grant them this Priviledge, their case being as now put, will be attended with no small inconveniency.

3. If the Promises are made only indefinitely to the Seed of Believers, then they seem evidently to appertain alike to their mediate as to their immediate Seed. In *Abraham's* case 'tis undeniable, that, as taken in an indefinite notion, they did equally and alike appertain to his Seed and Posterity mediately descended from him, as to his immediate Seed : neither had his immediate Seed any other interest in them then his mediate. Now the Apostle tells us expressly that the blessing

blessing of Abraham is come upon believing Gentiles ; or suppose we can from any Scripture-warrant limit the Promises as made only to the immediate Seed of Believers under the New Testament, yet seeing we cannot limit them to *Abraham's* immediate, but must grant them equally and alike to respect, and be extended to his mediate as to his immediate Seed, it will certainly follow, that all the Seed of the *Jews* to this very day, have an equal and alike interest in the Promises that *Isaac* and *Jacob* and the rest of both *Abraham's* and *Isaac's* Children had. And if so, I conceive, no reason can possibly be assigned, why the same Judgment of Charity may not be exercised towards these, as was exercised towards them ; and consequently they would be as due and proper Subjects of the Token of the Covenant as they were, and ought to have it applyed unto them : And if so be we cannot limit the Promise to the immediate Seed of Believers, as I much think we cannot, in case we grant them to be only indefinitely made to *Abraham's* natural Seed ; then there will be laid a fair ground for the Application of the Token of the Covenant, which now is Baptism, to all Infants universally, as may be easily shewed if necessary. But I shall not inlarge upon this. These reasons convince me past all rational contradiction, that the Covenant and Promises thereof neither were entred with, nor made to either the natural Seed of *Abraham*, or any other Believers in a mere indefinite notion : but however God might have and still has a more general respect both to *Abraham's* and all Believers Seed mediately descending from them respectively ; yet as entred with and made both to his and their immediate Seed ; so they are to be interpreted and understood in a definite notion,

reaching

# Infant-Baptism reviv'd. III

reaching and taking in each one of their Seed in particular. This Question being resolved, I shall now proceed to the Application and unfolding of this second Benefit assigned to the Infant-seed of Believers by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them : and here two things are to be enquired into.

1. What the Token of the Covenant has reference to ; or what it is that is ratified sealed and confirmed to Infants thereby.

2. Wherein the Good Benefit and Advantage of having that ( whatever it be ) that the Token of the Covenant hath reference unto, ratified sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign and Token, does consist.

1. For the first, And thus the Token of the Covenant has a double reference. First, To the Covenant it self, as more generally and absolutely considered. Secondly, To the particular Promises contained in it.

1. I say, the Token has reference to the Covenant it self, as absolutely and more generally considered : And hence, that which is firstly and primarily ratified sealed and confirmed to Infants ( and the same is true of the Adult ) by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, is the Covenant it self, as more generally and absolutely considered ; and consequently, and as the immediate and necessary result thereof, that which is Ratified and Confirmed is their Covenant-state. They are ( as I may so speak ) solemnly invested and settled in a Covenant-state with God ; they are absolutely *de presenti* removed from under the first Covenant entred with all Mankind in *Adam*, and solemnly invested with , and initiated into a new Covenant-state. Hence Circumci-

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sion (and the same is true of Baptism) is said to be *the Token of the Covenant*, as absolutely considered, Gen. 17. 11. as the one had, so the other has a first and primary respect and reference to the Covenant as absolutely taken; and consequentially to the state of those that are taken into Covenant; they are thereby solemnly put, and settled in a new Covenant-state and relation Godward: though I deny not, but that the new Covenant or Covenant of Grace is conditionally made with all, or rather assured to Mankind; there is an offer and tender of Christ with all his Benefits to all men upon condition of Faith and Repentance: *Go, says Christ, preach the Gospel to every Creature: he that believes and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believes not, shall be damned,* in that Mark. 16. 15, 16.. But *condionale nihil ponit in usu.* A conditional Covenant, though it makes a great alteration in the cases of Men, they are not now under a necessity of standing or falling according to the tenour or terms of the first Covenant; yet that does not change their state, they are yet Heirs of the curse denounced in case of the transgression of that Covenant; they are yet

*Children of wrath, the wrath of God abideth upon them,* John 3. 36.

\* *But the Seed of Believers are actually received into the Covenant of Grace, solemnized, ratified and confirmed by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them: and from this change in their states I conceive a discharge and immunity from the condemning power of Original sin, whether originans or originatum, does necessarily arise*

\* *Non dixit ira Dei veniet ad eum, sed ira Dei manet super eum. Omnes qui nascuntur mortales habent secum iram Dei. Quam iram Dei? quam exceptit primus homo Adam.* August. in loco.

arise and result unto them. How far or in what sense Mankind in general is freed from the sanction of the first Covenant by the new Covenant, as made conditionally with all Men, is not absolutely necessary for me to determine, and I shall endeavour to wave all controversies excentrical to my present design: this seems evident, that however others are, yet all those that are actually under the Covenant of Grace, as definitely entred with them, are *de presenti* freed from it, seeing there is an absolute inconsistency between being under the Law, and under Grace, at one and the same time. The Apostle, *Rom. 6. 14.* sets these two States in a direct antithesis or opposition the one to the other; whether we understand by Law here, the Mosaical Law, or the Law as given at Mount Sinai, wherein there was a revival of the Law of Works made with *Adam* in innocency, or that first Law or Covenant as so made with *Adam*; yet by Grace I conceive we must understand the Covenant of Grace, and then 'tis all one as to my present purpose: no man can be under two Covenants that are in nature or kind directly opposite the one to the other, at one and the same time. Hence I say, the Infants of Believers, being under the Covenant of Grace, they must needs be set free from the first Covenant in the same sense that all Believers are: and as for the Covenant of Grace that threatneth condemnation against none but either final rejecters of it, as in the case of those that are yet strangers to it, or total and final violators of it, as in case of those that are actually under it, and being free from the sanction of the first Covenant, and not under any obligation to suffer future condemnation, either as rejecters, or violators of the second, I conceive their immunity

from the condemning power of Original sin, yea of whatever sin, whether Original or Actual they fall under the guilt of, during their pure Infant-states, must necessarily ensue, though no express Promise of pardon (which I conceive it is not necessary to enquire after) should appertain unto them, *cessante obligatione legis & non obligante novo fædere*, there can be no condemnation to them on the account of any sin chargeable upon them. The sum of what has been said may be reduced into this Argument.

*Arg. 1.* All those that are neither under the curse of the Law, nor under the curse threatened in the first Covenant, nor condemnable by the Covenant of Grace, must needs be free from the condemning power of Original sin, yea of any sin they are at present chargeable with: but such is the case of the Infant-seed of Believers, during their pure Infant-state: therefore during that state, they are free from the condemning power of Original sin, yea of whatsoever sin they, during that state, are chargeable with.

The *major Proposition* will be readily granted on all hands, seeing sin, be it Original or Actual, receives its power to condemn, or has its strength, as the Apostle speaks, from some Law or Covenant under which the Person guilty is; as where *there is no Law, there is no transgression*: So where the Law threatens not condemnation, there is no condemnation; and condemnation must be either threatened in the Covenant of Works, or the Covenant of Grace: Hence if neither of these Laws or Covenants threaten condemnation unto men for any sin they are guilty of, their sin has not power to condemn them, or they must needs be free from the condemning power of any sin they are guilty of. So that I conceive the *major Proposition* stands

stands firm. For the *minor*, that is evident from what has been already said; the Law threatens not condemnation to the Infant-seed of Believers, because they are not under it; they are freed from the sanction of it, wherein future death is threatned. The Covenant of Grace threatens not condemnation to them, because they are neither Rejecters nor Violators of it: but on the other hand, the conditions of it are performed, though not by them, yet on their behalf, which the Covenant accepts as though performed by themselves in their own persons. Whence the Conclusion is undeniable. Again, that the Infant-seed of Believers are freed from the condemning power of Original sin, may be proved thus.

*Arg. 2.* All those that are under the condemning power of any sin, are in a state of enmity with God, or have God as an enemy to them: but the Infant-seed of Believers are not in such a state, neither have they God as an enemy to them; therefore they are not under the condemning power of any sin, and consequently not of Original sin.

The *major* Proposition is evident thus: God is only said to be an enemy unto Men, as he is obliged either in respect of his Essential Justice, or some Law given to, or Covenant made with him to punish according to the due desert of sin. God is not an enemy to Man merely as Man; nor yet merely as vitiated and corrupted with sin; for then he should be an enemy to all Men; yea to the regenerate as well as the unregenerate: but he is an enemy as under an obligation to punish according to the due desert of sin. Hence, he is an enemy to all those, and to those only, whom he is according to their present states and conditions obliged so to punish. Now while any are

under the condemning power of sin ; that is, have the guilt of sin remaining upon them, God is under an obligation to punish them according to the due desert of their sin ; I say, he is so while the guilt of their sin remains upon them, guilt being removed that obligation ceaseth. How God may be under such an obligation, and yet give Faith and Repentance whereby that guilt may be removed, is obvious to all, and need not here be declared : but I say, while guilt remains, while sin has a power to condemn, God stands related as an enemy unto Men, or they are in a state of enmity with him. But now, which is our *minor Proposition*, the Infant-seed of Believers are not in such a state. This is not only evident from what has been already said; but from the absolute inconsistency between a state of enmity, and that mutual relation between God and them, as he is their God, and they his People, of which more by and by. Now then the Premises being true, the Conclusion is certain.

I might further argue from the special reference, that the Token of the Covenant, whether Circumcision or Baptism, had and has to the remission and pardon of sin. Circumcision is said to be a Seal of the righteousness of Faith, which at least includes the remission of sin. Saith the Apostle Peter to these awaked Jews, Be baptized for the remission of sin, Acts 2. Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, says Ananias to Paul, Acts 22. 16. Now the Token of the Covenant having such a particular and special reference to the pardon and remission of sin, it may ( suppose it will not demonstrate it it self, yet ) much confirm us in this truth, that the Infant-seed of Believers are freed from the guilt and condemning power

of that sin they are guilty of, and have that ( if not directly, yet ) consequently sealed and confirmed to them by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them. And that the Infant-seed of Believers have this Good or Benefit, viz. Immunity from the condemning power of Original sin, sealed and confirmed to them by the Token of the Covenant, is not only according to the judgments of the generality, if not universality of all the Ancients, but of many of our Modern Divines, as the *Lutherans*, the Divines of the Synod of *Dort*, with many others, is so commonly known, that to produce particular testimonies is wholly needless.

## C H A P. VI.

The second reference of the Token of the Covenant declared, where two Questions are resolved. First, What Promises appertain to the Seed of Believers as such. These determined to be only two. First, That God will be a God to them. Secondly, That they shall be saved. The second Question, (viz.) What is the Good contained in these Promises. The Good contained in the latter more briefly shewed. The Good contained in the former, more largely insisted upon. A twofold Good determined to be contained in it. First, A Covenant-relation is constituted by it between God and the Seed of Believers. Secondly, God by it has put himself under an obligation to communicate himself to, and act for their Good and Benefit. Those communications of himself to, and these actings for their Good and Benefit that God has obliged himself to, shewed to be limited three ways. Where it is shewed, that this Promise of God's being a God to his People, whether Infants or Adult, does not, as taken absolutely and by it self, either for the present confer

confer, or for the future absolutely ensure, any particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Gospel upon, or to any interested in it; but is only an obligation upon God to make them all good according to their true tenour, and upon supposition of their condition being performed by man. This proved more generally by one Argument. That confirmed in the several branches of it.

2. **A**S the Covenant as abstractly considered, and consequentially their Covenant-state, with a full discharge and freedom from the guilt and condemning power of Original sin, as the inseparable and necessary effect and consequence thereof, is ratified, sealed and confirmed to the Infant-seed of Believers by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them: So the particular Promises of the Covenant appertaining to them, are alike sealed and confirmed to them thereby. Now here two things must be enquired into.

First, What Promises of the Covenant do appertain to them.

Secondly, What is the proper good contained in, and answerably conferred upon, or assured to them by those Promises.

For the first, I find only these two Promises made unto them, merely as the Seed of such Parents: There are it's true, other Promises that have an indefinite respect unto them, nigher unto which they stand than the rest of Mankind, as has been before observed: but for Promises made definitely to them, and which

do appertain unto them, merely as the Seed of believing Parents ; so I conceive there are only these two.

1. That God will be a God to them. Thus when the Lord first established his Covenant with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, he not only promises to be a God to him, but to his Seed after him ; *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy Seed after thee,* Gen. 17. 7. So that this Promise of God's being a God to them is as expressly made to *Abraham's* Seed (and that he intends his natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins, as well as his mystical, has been sufficiently proved elsewhere) as to *Abraham* himself ; and is so continued to all Believers and their natural Seed, as has been also proved. So that that is the first Promise of the Covenant appertaining to the Infant-seed of Believers as such.

2. The other is, that God will give them the Land of Canaan; that is, as that Promise is explained in the New Testament, *they shall be saved.* The Land of Canaan was a Type of Heaven, and the main and principal good intended in that Promise of Canaan was Heaven : And hence it was that *Abraham* from this Promise raises his hope and expectation of a City that has foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God, Hebr. 11. 10. And did not the Promise principally intend Heaven, or future Salvation, it had signified nothing either to *Abraham* himself, or any of his Seed, for upward of four hundred years ; besides 'tis said to be given for an everlasting possession, which in respect of that Land literally taken was not true. And hence again, the Apostle *Paul* plainly intimates, or rather expressly declares, that all Believers are

Heirs to, and have an equal interest in that Promise with *Abraham* himself, *Heb.* 6. 13, to the end of the Chapter, compared with *Gen.* 22. 16, 17. He tells us the reason of Gods confirming this Promise to *Abraham* ( having respect to this very Promise ) with an oath was, *that we* ( that betake our selves to this hope that is set before us ; that is, do renounce the World, and the things thereof, and betake our selves to Christ and his ways in hope of Heaven ) *might have more strong consolation* : Now unless we were Joynt-heirs with *Abraham* of this Promise, the confirmation of it to him by an oath had made nothing to our consolation : And this will yet be more evident if we consider, that as God promised to bless *Abraham*, so to multiply his Seed, and give them to possess the gates of their enemies ; that is, he would give them the Land of *Canaan* ; and Believers are *Abraham's* Seed, and as such Heirs with him of that Promise : and hence in confirming that Promise unto him with an oath, he alike confirmed it unto us. From all which it is evident that the Promise of the Land of *Canaan* was, according to the true mind and meaning of God in it, a promise of Heaven : So that I say, that is the other Promise appertaining to the Seed of Believers as such, viz. the promise of the Land of *Canaan*, or of Heaven, of future Salvation. Hence the Apostle tells the Jaylor, that upon his believing both himself and his house should be saved, *Acts* 16. 31. But that is the first thing to be enquired into, viz. What Promises of the Covenant appertain to the Seed of Believers as such ? They are these two.

I. That God will be a God to them, and they shall possess the Land of *Canaan* ; or, as *Abraham* understands it, a City that has foundations, whose Maker and

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and Builder is God ; that is, Heaven ; which in other words, is, they shall be saved. The former of these Promises respects the time present ; the latter the time to come : for the present God will be a God to them ; for the future they shall be saved : that is, upon supposition of their performance of the conditions of the Covenant.

2. What is the Good intended in, and consequently conveyed and made over to the Seed of Believers by these Promises ?

1. For the latter of these Promises, *viz.* that of future Salvation. To begin with that first, because there is no difficulty in it (as to what concerns our present purpose) requiring a large discussion of it : and therefore in brief, by Salvation we are to understand, all that Glory, Happiness and Blessedness, whether consisting in liberation and freedom from evil, or any positive Good, that God has purposed, and Christ has purchased for his People, to be possessed and enjoyed by them in Heaven, or in the life to come ; which though we may rationally suppose will gradually differ as enjoyed by Infants from that to be possessed and enjoyed by Adult Believers ; especially who have attained to higher degrees in Grace and Holiness ; or have done, and suffered much for Christ here in the World : yet as it will be the same for kind, so it will be exceeding great. Though the Glory, Happiness and Blessedness of the Saved, as well as the Misery of the Damned will differ gradually, yet the lowest degree of Glory, Happiness and Blessedness to be enjoyed in Heaven, as also of Misery to be suffered in Hell will be unconceiveably great. The Holy Ghost tells us, *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared*

for them that love him ; that is, for all them that love him. In what latitude we are to understand these things, said to be prepared for them that love God, we need not enquire : be sure 'tis true of the things prepared and reserved for Saints in Heaven, they are things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man, not into the heart of a merely natural man, so as to conceive what, much less how great they are : but not into the heart of spiritual or regenerate men so as fully to apprehend what or how great and excellent they are. And as this is true of things that God has prepared for them that love him : So it is alike true of the things prepared for them that are beloved of him, though through the immaturity of their age they are incapable of an actual love to him. The Glory, Happiness and Blessedness of the lowest Saint in Heaven, whether dying in Infancy, or living to years of Maturity, will quite surpass the present thoughts and apprehensions of the most enlightened understanding. And I say, all that Glory, Happiness and Blessedness, is included and intended in this term *Salvation*, *they shall be saved*, that is, perfectly freed and delivered from all misery that man through sin is become subject to ; and instated in the contrary state of Glory, Happiness and Blessedness. But

2. For the other Promise, *viz.* That of God's being a God to them ; there is more difficulty in determining what is that Good contained in, and granted to the Infant-seed of Believers by it : In the general this seems plain, that it must be interpreted and understood as appertaining to Infants, as it is to be interpreted and understood as appertaining to the Adult, seeing we have no warrant from the Scripture, neither does

does the different capacity of Infants and the Adult necessitate us to interpret and understand it otherwise as appertaining to the one, than we do as appertaining to the other : and therefore we must a little enquire into, and endeavour to state the true sense and meaning of this grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promises to be a God to his People, whether as appertaining to Infants or Adult Believers ; and thus taking the Covenant in a strict and proper sense, for a mutual engagement between God and Man, so I conceive only these two things are intended, and included in it.

1. A mutual Relation between God and his People is constituted and established thereby : and as by the constitution of this Relation between God and his People, they are brought nigh to him, and he is nigh to them. Hence they are said to be near to God, *He also exalteth the Horn of his People, the praise of all his Saints, even of the Children of Israel, a People near unto him, Psal. 148. 14.* And if they are near to him, he must needs be nigh to them : so they have a mutual propriety and interest each in other. Hence are those appropriating terms in Scripture, and that on both parts. Hence on God's part, says he, *yea I sware unto thee, and entred into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine, Ezek. 16. 8.* Though God has a propriety in all Creatures, they are all his ; yet we see he lays a peculiar claim to his People, as having a more especial interest and propriety in them above what he has in others, and that by virtue of the Covenant entred with them : So on the People of Gods part, *My Beloved is mine, saith the Spouse, Cant. 2. 16. Oh my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord, Psal. 16. 2.* And the like appro-

priating terms we have frequently in Scripture. Man by his sin has lost his propriety and interest in God ; hence whosoever now has an interest and propriety in him, it must be by virtue of his own free Gift and Promise : they only can groundedly lay claim to interest and propriety in him to whom he promises to be a God. Hence his People hold their interest in him, not by virtue of their relation to him as his Creatures, but by the Covenant entered with them, wherein he has promised to be a God to them, and take them to be his People. And that is the first good contained in, and conveyed to the Infant-seed of Believers by this Promise, there is a mutual relation constituted thereby between God and them : by means whereof they have a mutual interest and propriety each in other, as they are God's, and therefore said to be *born to him, and to be his Children*, Ezek. 16. 20, 21. so he is theirs : and how great a Good is that for God to give himself to the Seed of his People, as well as to them themselves ? That the great God *quantus, quantus est,* is and may be said to be in a proper sense, their God, their Portion and Inheritance ?

2. The Good of, or contained in this Promise, is this ; that God thereby has put himself under an obligation to his People to communicate himself to them, and act for their good, benefit and advantage, according to his own infinite Perfections, the true tenour of the Covenant made with them, and their capacity to receive : or thus, he has by this Promise put himself under an obligation to his People, to improve and employ all his Attributes for their good, benefit and advantage, in a way agreeable to the whole Covenant, and their capability of receiving any good, benefit and advantage by that improvement, and employ-

ment.

ment of his several Attributes for them. So that the communications that God by this Promise has obliged himself to make of himself to his People, and these actings for their good, benefit and advantage, that he by the same Promise has obliged himself to, are limited three ways.

1. By his own infinite Perfections : and thus it is impossible for him to communicate his Deity to them, as the Deity of the Father is communicated to the Son ; and the Deity of the Father and the Son to the Spirit ; the infinity of the Deity renders it incommunicable to any being *extra se*, without it self : but for his actings for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of his People they receive no limitations from his Perfections as absolutely considered in themselves ; because they are all infinite in themselves, and should he act *ad ultimum virium*, no other bounds or limits are assignable to them by the Creature than their *non Deification*. And therefore,

2. The communications of God to, and his actings for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of his People, are limited by the Covenant he has made with them ; and that both in regard of the Good he will communicate to, or do for them, and also in regard of the terms and conditions upon which he will communicate that Good to, and do it for them. Hence no more good can be expected from God, than what is contained in some Promise of the Covenant as made either indefinitely with the house of *Israel* in general, or definitely with particular and individual persons ; though 'tis true, the full Good contained in some Promises, especially those relating to the life to come, cannot be comprehended by any, while in this life : and therefore it is said, Christ shall come to be admired

in them that believe, 2 Thess. i. 10. the Good they then receive from him, exceeding their present expectations : but yet whatever Good they do, or then shall receive, is contained in some Promise. The Covenant is *norma judicij*, both in respect of rewarding the Righteous and punishing the Wicked. And

3. As the communications God makes of himself to, and his acting for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of his People, are limited by the Covenant, in regard of the Good communicated to, and done for them: So in regard of the terms and conditions upon which he does, and will communicate himself to them, and act for their Good, Benefit and Advantage, that the Covenant of Grace as definitely made with particular Persons is conditional, or does require somewhat of duty on mans part in order to the enjoyment of the Good promised, is to me past all rational doubt, and generally granted on all hands. I shall not therefore add any thing to prove it, but though God in some cases may, and sometimes does give the Good of some Promise, where man either wholly or in a great measure fails in performing the conditions prefixed to them; yet he is not obliged either by this grand Promise nor any other so to do: and in respect of the great fundamental Blessings of the Covenant, as pardon of Sin, future Glory, &c. He never gives them but upon supposition of the real and true performance of the conditions required in the Covenant on mans part. Hence I conceive it will necessarily follow, that as no particular persons whether Infants or Adult, have an actual interest in this Promise; but such as either for or by whom the fundamental conditions required to a Covenant-state are performed: so this Promise not specifying any particular Good, it does

not simply and absolutely of it self confer or give an immediate right to any Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant to those that have an interest in it ; it only constitutes a Covenant-relation between God and Man, and thereby gives them a mutual interest and propriety in each other, and then obliges God to communicate himself to, and act for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of those that are under it, or interested in it, according to the tenour of the whole Covenant, or the various Promises contained therein : so that though this Promise does virtually include and comprehend the whole Good of the Covenant whether consisting in Spiritual or Temporal Blessings, yet does not merely or absolutely of it self confer, or ensure the Good of any one Promise appertaining to the Covenant upon or to any individual or particular Persons whatsoever ; it secures the injoyment of all the Good contained in the several and various Promises of the Covenant to those, for or by whom the conditions or duties required therein are performed ; but does not absolutely confer or ensure the injoyment of the Good contained in any one Promise. And hence, with submission to better judgments, I conceive, that the Covenant-state of the Infant-seed of Believers does not indispensibly require any operations of the Spirit upon their hearts either for the disposing them to act, or facilitating their acting of Grace, as they become capable to do it ; or for the renovation of their natures, and effecting Grace in them. No such operations are necessary in order to their having or performing the conditions of a Covenant-state ; seeing the condition of their Covenant-state is without them, and is their Parents Faith ; no such operations are included in, or assured by this Promise

of God's being a God to them ; nor as I conceive, in that other concerning their future Salvation : for though 'tis true, Regeneration is absolutely necessary to admission into, and the actual possession of Heaven ; yet that may be wrought *in transitu*, (as the relicks of indwelling sin are purged away in Believers) or at any time anteceding when God sees meet : But of this more by and by.

And that this Promise of God's being a God to his People, whether Infants or Adult Believers, does not of it self either immediately confer, or for the future absolutely ensure the Good contained in any of the various Promises of the Covenant made to them, and consequently only lays such an obligation upon God as is afore express'd, I shall first prove by one more general Argument, and then clear it up in some particular instances.

*Arg.* Whatever Good is either conferred or granted for the present, or ensured for the future, by any Promise as taken absolutely and by it self, must be expressly held forth, or necessarily implied in the Terms in which it is made, or else must in some other place of Scripture be declared to be intended in it : But in this Promise no particular Good, &c.

For the *major* Proposition, the enumeration being full and sufficient, that cannot be gainsaid.

For the *minor*, the truth of that will appear in the particular Branches of it.

First, That no particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant is expressly held forth in the Terms of this Promise it self, is obvious unto all : God's promising to be a God to any neither specifies, nor particularly expresses any particular Good he will vouchsafe to, or bestow upon them :

it is only a more general assurance of some Good, but what that Good is, or upon what terms it shall be enjoyed is not express.

2. That no particular Good is necessarily implied or included in the Terms of the Promise is evident thus. It must be implied and included either merely *sub notione boni*, or *sub notione boni promissi*, either as a Good in the general, or as a promised Good : but no particular Good can be implied or included under either of these notions ; for then all Good in general, at least all promised Good, must be implied and included *à quatenus ad omne valet consequentia*, and then all Good, at least all promised Good, would be either actually conferred, or a right thereunto would be given, or the future enjoyment thereof would be infallibly secured upon or to all those that have an Interest in this Promise ; the contrary whereunto is not only evident to every ones observation, but undeniably evident from Scripture, as shall be shewed more fully by and by.

3. That any particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant is declared in any Scripture to be implied or included in this Promise cannot be affirmed ; because no such Declaration is to be found. Whatever Scriptures may be produced for that purpose, I doubt not, but it will be easily made to appear they prove not the thing they are produced for the proof of. Hence I conclude, that this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, does neither actually confer, nor give a right to, nor absolutely secure any particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant upon or to those that have an Interest in it : but is only

only an obligation upon God to communicate himself to them, and act or improve and employ his several Attributes for their Good, Benefit and Advantage; according to the true tenour of the Covenant and the various Promises contained in it.

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## C H A P. VII.

That the forementioned Good, and that only, is contained in that grand Promise of the Covenant, further confirmed in some particular Instances. The first Instance proposed. No special or saving influences or operations of the Spirit are included in this Promise, so as by it, as taken absolutely and by it self, to be conferred upon, or absolutely ensured to any interested in it. The several uses and ends of these influences and operations, declared. What is affirmed, proved. First, more generally. Secondly, more particularly. One Objection answered. A second Instance proposed: where it is proved, That no Love that is peculiar and proper to the Elect, is express'd or ensured in, or by this grand Promise of the Covenant, as taken absolutely and by it self, to all interested in it. This largely insisted upon. What may be pleaded against it, answered.

swered. A brief Recapitulation of that Good redounding to the Seed of Believers, as received into Covenant with their Parents, and having these two Promises appertaining to them. That Good summed up under four Heads. That the Seed of Believers have all Good, proved by four Arguments. The second Question for the unfolding this second Good or Benefit arising to the Seed of Believers from the Application of the Token of the Covenant, proposed: where it is shewed wherein the Benefit and Advantage of having the Covenant with the Promise of it ratified, sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign or Token, does consist. What hazard is run by the neglect of the Application of the Token of the Covenant, shewed.

For the further clearing up and confirming of what is affirmed, I shall instance in some particular Good things promised in the Covenant of Grace, which of all things promised may seem most probably included in, and consequently granted and ensured by this Promise to those that have an interest in it, and shew that they are not so included in it, as by it, as absolutely taken, to be conferred upon, granted or ensured to any that are interested in it.

I. First, Let us instance in the special and saving operations and influences of the Spirit of God. These are a Good which of all Good things promised in the Covenant may seem to be most essential to this Promise, and

yet we shall find it to be otherwise. And for clearing up of this we may observe, - that these saving influences and operations of the Spirit are vouchsafed for a threefold end and purpose in the general.

1. First, For the effecting and producing the first Grace, as the first saving Illumination of the Mind, the Renovation of the Nature by Regeneration.

2. Secondly, For the maintaining the Seed and truth of Grace in the Soul, whereby its Union with Christ is continued.

3. Thirdly, For the managing and carrying on the further spiritual concerns of the Soul, consisting in higher degrees of Sanctification, Assurance, Peace, Joy, the due performance of holy Duties and the like. Now that these saving influences and operations of the Spirit for any of, or for all these several ends and purposes are not so included in this Promise of God's being a God to his People, as to be actually granted or ensured by it, as taken absolutely and by it self, to any of those that have an Interest in it, will appear two ways.

First, more generally, and we may argue thus: If any of these saving influences and operations of the Spirit are included in, and absolutely ensured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self; then they are all alike included in, and absolutely ensured by it: But all these influences and operations of the Spirit are not included in, or absolutely ensured by it; and therefore not any.

The *Minor* is undeniable: for if all these saving influences and operations of the Spirit are included in, and absolutely ensured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, then all that have an interest in the Promise would enjoy all those influences and operations of the Spirit, and that in the highest degree, or

else God must be supposed to fail in the performance of the Promise : but now it is past all rational contradiction, that all that have an Interest in this Promise, do not enjoy all these influences and operations of the Spirit, possibly some, if not all, yet in a very low degree, and then much less in the highest degree; neither can it without blasphemy be supposed that God does at any time fail in the performance of his Promises : therefore undoubtedly they are not all, especially in the highest degree, in which they may be enjoyed by men in this life, included in, nor absolutely ensured by this Promise.

The Consequence in the *Major Proposition* is evident ; because the Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, neither specifieth nor particularizeth any of these influences or operations of the Spirit, neither is there any thing in the Promise it self, nor in any explication or interpretation that God himself in any other place of Scripture makes of it, is a ground for us to distinguish and say, such influences and operations of the Spirit are included in, and absolutely ensured by it, and not others ; and where neither the Promise it self distinguisheth, nor are we in any other place of Scripture warranted to distinguish of the good contained in, and ensured by the Promise, there we are not at all to distinguish ; and hence, as in case any of these influences and operations of the Spirit are included in, and absolutely ensured by this Promise, we have no reason from the Promise it self, why we should not conclude that they are all included in, and ensured by it : so seeing it is certain they are not all included in, and ensured by it, we have no reason to conclude nor suppose that any are. But

Secondly, more particularly : And thus we shall find

find this true in respect of these influences and operations of the Spirit, as vouchsafed for these several ends and purposes before mentioned, distinctly considered.

First, For those influences and operations of the Spirit vouchsafed for the effecting and producing the first Grace ; that these influences and operations of the Spirit cannot be included in, or ensured by this Promise, is evident ; Because in respect of the Adult they are indispensably presupposed to an Interest in it, and the Promise cannot secure to any a Good that is indispensably required antecedent to an Interest in it ; for then it would secure the Good contained in it to these to whom at present it does not appertain, which is impossible ; for then a Man must be supposed to have an Interest in the Promise before he has that which is indispensably necessary to his having an Interest in it, which is an absolute contradiction. Now if this Promise does not secure these influences and operations of the Spirit to such, it cannot be rationally supposed to secure them to any others, and consequently they cannot be included in, or ensured to any by it, as taken absolutely and by it self.

Secondly, For those influences of the Spirit vouchsafed, for the maintaining the seed and truth of Grace in the Soul wherein it is already wrought, whereby its Union with Christ is maintained : that those influences and operations of the Spirit are not included in, nor ensured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, is alike evident with the former, and that upon the same ground, viz. the necessary precedency of the Soul's union with Christ, and consequently of these influences and operations of the Spirit necessary to the maintaining of that union, at least in order

of nature to its holding its interest in the Promise ; If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father, 1 John 2. 24. The remaining or abiding of the Word, viz. in that effect or fruit of it, habitual Grace in the Soul, is the condition of; and consequently must necessarily be considered as antecedent to (at least in order of nature.) its union with and interest in both the Son and the Father. Hence should these influences and operations of the Spirit be included in, and ensured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, it would cease to be conditional and become an absolute Promise, and consequently discharge the People of God from all duty subordinate to their maintaining their Union with Christ and interest in this Promise : to talk of an absolute Promise which requires duty on Man's part in order to his injoying the Good contained in it, is an absolute contradiction.

3. Thirdly, For the third Head of the Spirit's influences and operations, viz. such as are vouchsafed for the carrying on and managing the further and higher concerns of the Soul, in the various degrees of Sanctification, Assurance, Peace, Joy, spiritual performance of holy duties and the like, that these are not included in this grand Promise of the Covenant so as to be conferred, or absolutely ensured thereby, as taken absolutely and by it self, to all that have an interest in it, is evident from the undeniable experiences of many, if not most Believers. 'Tis possible that true Believers may for a time be so far deserted, as to injoy only such influences and operations of the Spirit as are simply and absolutely necessary to the maintaining

taining the life of Grace in them, and that in the very habit and seed thereof, which could not be, in case these influences and operations of the Spirit vouchsafed for these higher ends and purposes were included in, and absolutely secured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self: so that the truth affirmed is sufficiently evident in this first instance. None of the saving influences or operations of the Spirit are included in this Promise of God's being a God to his People, so as by it as taken absolutely and by it self, to be conferred upon, or absolutely ensured to any interested in it.

*Obj.* But possibly some may object, that this Promise seems to be called the *Promise of the Spirit*, Gal. 3. 14. And therefore, sure it must necessarily include at least some of the saving influences and operations of the Spirit, and consequently secure them to all that have an interest in it.

*Answ.* That any of the saving operations of the Spirit are included in this Promise cannot be concluded from that Scripture, will appear by a brief view of the several interpretations that it will admit of, and are put upon it by our best Interpreters. Thus some conceive that a distinct Good is intended in this Promise of the Spirit, from that blessing of *Abraham*, said to come upon the Gentiles through Christ. By the blessing of *Abraham* we are to understand the Good contained in this grand Promise of the Covenant, viz. *That God would be a God to him and his Seed*; but then by the Promise of the Spirit, they conceive a further consequential Good is intended, viz. the indwelling presence of the Spirit, with those saving influences and operations that are consequential thereunto.

\* ἡ δὲ πίσις  
τὴν δικαιοσύ-  
ννα ἐισήγειν,  
ἡ δὲ δικαιοσύνη<sup>ν</sup>  
τὴν χάριν τὸ  
πέντεπλατό-  
επιστάσθαι.

Chrysostom.

unto\*. And for the right understanding of this, we must observe, that the Apostle here speaks to Adult Believers, and tells them that the blessing of *Abraham* was come upon them, through Christ they were made Heirs of this Promise, as the Seed of *Abraham* they were now under this Promise of God's being a God to them and their natural Seed,

as he was to *Abraham*, and as consequential to their interest in this Promise they were under another Promise, viz. that of the Spirit: So that the Apostle speaks here of the Promise of the Spirit as appertaining to Adult Believers consequential to *Abraham*'s blessing being come upon them. Of this Opinion were *Chrysostom* of old, and *Bеза* of late; but others suppose that one and the same Good is intended in both parts of the Verse, and answerably that by the Promise of the Spirit is meant the blessing of *Abraham* said to be come upon the Gentiles. And taking the words thus, a twofold sense may be given of them.

First, This blessing of *Abraham* may be called the Promise of the Spirit, only to denote the nature or kind of that blessing promised, 'tis a Spiritual Blessing, or a Promise of a spiritual Good, so *Parens*; or else that Blessing may be called the Promise of the Spirit, only to denote the Author of it, it was given by the Spirit, and by his Inspiration left upon Record in the Scriptures: so that take the sense which way we will, there is no necessity that we should take that Promise including a Promise of the Spirit. But let that suffice for the first instance.

Secondly, Let us take another instance in the Love and

and Favour of God, that is a peculiar Good promised in the Covenant of Grace, *I will love them freely*, Hos. 14. 4. Now here again we shall find that this Promise taken absolutely and by it self, does not necessarily imply or include, and consequently does not absolutely ensure to all that have an interest in it, such Love or Favour from God as is peculiar and proper to the Elect: The Apostle John indeed tells us, *that God is Love*, and as he is essentially Love, so he expresses his Love, as in various ways, so in various degrees and measures towards his Creatures, according to the good pleasure of his Will: Now it is readily granted, that God does express more Love, or does vouchsafe higher and greater effects and fruits of his Love to those to whom he has extended his Covenant, or between himself and whom he hath constituted a Covenant-relation, than he has done to the rest of Mankind, between himself and whom there is no such Covenant-relation. Thus the very extending his Covenant to the Infant-seed of Believers, and giving them a present propriety in, and taking them to be a peculiar People to himself, are glorious expressions or fruits of his Love to them; besides various other expressions and fruits of his Love vouchsafed to them as in a Covenant-state, and Members of the Church and Family of Christ as visible here upon earth, and while the Covenant-relation, with the priviledges attending it are continued to them, the Love exprest in it and them is continued to them: But yet, as these expressions and fruits of his Love and Favour are not peculiar and proper to the Elect, but may be common to others with them, and may be, and answerably are withdrawn from them, upon a failure in the performance of the conditions of the Covenant by them; so no more

more or no further Love is ensured by this Promise, than what is actually expressed in giving it to them, and constituting thereby a Covenant-relation between him and them, and vouchsafing them the Token of his Covenant, and thereby admission into his Church, Kingdom and Family as visible here upon earth. So that I have here two things to prove.

1. First, That God may extend his Covenant to the Non-elect, so as to constitute thereby a true Covenant-relation between himself and them, and may thereupon vouchsafe them the Token of his Covenant, and thereby admission into the visible Church; and consequently that what Love and Favour is express in these things is not peculiar to the Elect.

2. Secondly, That this grand Promise of the Covenant, as taken absolutely and by it self, does not necessarily include, and consequently does not ensure any further Love or Favour peculiar and proper to the Elect to any of those to whom it is made, and to whom it does appertain.

For the first, that is proved thus: If for God so to extend his Covenant to, or enter it with some Non-elect, as to constitute a true and proper Covenant-relation between himself and them, and to vouchsafe them thereupon the Token of it, and thereby admit them as Members of the Church visible, be simply and absolutely possible in it self, and be no way inconsistent with what himself has revealed, and declared in his Word, either concerning the subjects or nature and tenour of the Covenant, or concerning the Good vouchsafed, or to be vouchsafed to those who are taken in as subjects of it, then he may extend it in the sense before express to some Non-elect, and answerably vouchsafe them the Token of it; But the former is true; therefore

the latter. The *Minor* Proposition alone needs proof ; and here we have in the general two things to prove.

First, That for God to extend his Covenant to the Non-elect and vouchsafe them the Token of it, is simply and absolutely possible in it self: Now for this, that this is simply and absolutely possible is unquestionable: The Sovereignty of God and his absolute freedom to deal with his Creatures as himself pleases, secures this past all rational doubt; if he may (as who questions but that he may) enter Covenant conditionally with all Men, why may he not go somewhat further with some, and actually take them into a Covenant-relation with himself, and vouchsafe them the Token of his Covenant whom yet he has not ordained to Salvation ?

Secondly, That for God thus to do is no way inconsistent with what he has revealed and declared in his Word, either concerning the subjects or the nature and tenour of the Covenant, or concerning the Good vouchsafed, or to be vouchsafed to those that are taken in as the subjects of it. The truth of this will appear in the particular branches : And thus,

First, For God to extend his Covenant to some Non-elect, and answerably vouchsafe them the Token of it, is no way inconsistent with what he has declared in his Word concerning the subjects of it : This is sufficiently evident, because whatever God has declared in his Word concerning the subjects of his Covenant, yet he has no where declared that he would not take in any as the subjects of it that were not elected ; he has no where limited his Covenant to the Elect. If there be any such declaration in the Scriptures let it be shewed.

Secondly, That for God so to extend his Covenant to

So some Non-elect, is no way inconsistent with what he has declared in his Word concerning the nature and tenour of the Covenant it self. That which alone can be pleaded, as opposing God's extending his Covenant in the sense express to the Non-elect, is, what he has declared concerning the everlastingness and unchangeableness of it, with the provision made, and security given, that it shall never be broken by those that are taken in as subjects of it ; And there is indeed a seeming inconsistency between what is now affirmed concerning Gods extending his Covenant to the Non-elect, and those things so frequently asserted and inculcated in the Scriptures ; and thus much shall be readily granted, that those things so frequently declared and repeated in the Scriptures concerning the Covenant, do infallibly prove that the Covenant as entred with some, shall stand firm and remain inviolate, shall never be broken ; yet I conceive all that is delclared in Scripture of this nature concerning the Covenant, will not prove but that God may, and that in a consistency with his Word, extend it in the sense express to some that are not elected. For

First, As for what the Scriptures declare concerning the everlastingness of the Covenant : And thus it's true, the Covenant of Grace is frequently affirmed to be an everlasting Covenant, Gen. 17. 7. Isa. 55. 3. Jer. 32. 40. But to that I would say three things.

First, That the Covenant may be called an everlasting Covenant on either of these two accounts.

First, On the account of the Good promised in it : The Good promised in the Covenant is not a mere temporal, or temporary Good, but an eternal or everlasting Good, even everlasting blessednes and happiness : Thus the Land of Canaan is said to be an everlasting

everlasting Possession, because the Good typified by, and principally intended in the Promise of that Land, is everlasting Happiness and Blessedness : Or

Secondly, The Covenant may be said to be an everlasting Covenant, on the account of the duration of it throughout all ages, and that as to the essence or substance of it invariable, whether we respect the Promises on God's part, or the duties to be performed on Man's part : though there has been, and may be some variations in the administrations of the Covenant; yet it is as to the substance of it one and the same, and so shall continue while *Abraham* has a Seed upon the earth ; and on either of these accounts it may be called an everlasting Covenant.

*Obj.* But it may be some will say, if we grant that the Covenant is not called an everlasting Covenant from the constancy and immutability of it as made with particular Persons, the foundation of the Doctrine of Perseverance will be greatly shaken thereby.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* To that I shall only say two or three things.

First, That its true we must have an equal respect unto all the Doctrines of the Gospel, especially that are of equal weight and importance : and answerably take heed that we do not establish one Doctrine upon the ruines of another ; that we do not by endeavouring to establish one Doctrine shake the foundations of another ; and hence as we must be careful, that, while we endeavour to establish the Doctrine of Infant-Baptism, we do not shake the Doctrine of Perseverance, and so *vice versa* ; both Doctrines may be sufficiently established upon Scripture grounds without prejudice each to other : And therefore

Secondly, Though we grant the Scriptures affirming the Covenant to be an everlasting Covenant, will not

not infallibly prove its constancy and immutability, as made with particular persons, yet the Doctrine of Saints perseverance may be established against all rational opposition upon other Scripture grounds: Of which more hereafter; and therefore

Thirdly, We may grant, yea affirm, that the Covenant is said to be everlasting from its constancy and immutability, as made with particular persons, and yet hold and maintain that God may extend it in the sense exprest to some that are not elected, and answerably an Argument may be drawn

See my *Infant-Baptism from Heaven.* Book I. Page 50.

from this property of the Covenant, viz. its Eternity, for the establishing the Doctrine of Perseverance, without any prejudice to the Doctrine of Infant-Baptism; only then we must distinguish between the Covenant as compleatly made with the Adult, and as less compleatly entred with Infants as the Seed of believing Parents. And that when the Covenant is called an everlasting Covenant, it's to be understood of the Covenant as compleatly made with the Adult, is evident from the way it comes to be so; and that is by God's putting his Laws in the minds, and writing them in the hearts of those with whom it is made. Now these Promises of putting the Law in the mind, and writing it in the heart, as they are only made indefinitely to the Church in general, and consequently secure not the Good contained in them to each individual person to whom in common with others they do appertain; so they are at least ordinarily only made good to the Adult, and to whomsoever they are made good the Covenant abides firm, and as established between God and them, may be truly called an everlasting Covenant: But this brings me

to the third Branch of this second thing proposed for proof of the *minor* Proposition of our foregoing Argument ; so that what is declared in the Scriptures concerning the everlastingness of the Covenant, may very well consist with what is affirmed concerning God's extending it to the Non-elect. It may be said to be an everlasting Covenant on several accounts; but grant it to be so called on the account of its constancy and immutability, as made with particular persons, yet it must then be taken as made only with the Adult. God has made his Covenant conditionally with all mankind, whereby though all men as absolutely considered are put in a capacity or possibility of being saved, yet Salvation is absolutely secured to none ; he has so extended his Covenant to the Seed of Believers as thereby to constitute a true and proper Covenant-relation between himself and them, when yet, the Covenant being not fully compleat, their state is mutable : when the condition devolves upon themselves, they may fail in the performance of it, and thereupon be cast out; but when once the Covenant becomes compleat, is mutually plighted between God and an Adult person, through the saving operations of the Spirit upon the heart, now it is an unchangeable and everlasting Covenant, the soul's performance of the conditions being secured by the abiding presence of the Spirit in it. But

Thirdly, That for God so to extend his Covenant to some that are not elected, as to constitute a true and proper Covenant-relation between himself and them, is no way inconsistent with what the Scriptures declare concerning any Good vouchsafed or to be vouchsafed to those that are taken in as Subjects of it. And here again a twofold Good can only, as I

judge be pleaded, as opposing what is affirmed.

First, Their discharge and immunity from the guilt and condemning power of Original sin, resulting from their Covenant-state.

Secondly, Saving Grace. The former is a Good actually vouchsafed; the latter may be supposed to be necessarily vouchsafed, by virtue of the Promise made to the Covenant-people of God.

But for the former, I shall only say, 'tis sufficient that God has no where declared in his Word, that all that are or may be discharged of, and have an immunity from the guilt and condemning power of any, however of Original sin, shall infallibly be preserved in a Covenant-state, and thereby brought to Salvation at last. I know in part what is said as to this, but let me say, to bottom the Doctrine of Perseverance upon such a supposition is altogether unsafe. Whether the guilt of Original sin do revive and be recharged upon such of the Seed of Believers as do, when they grow up to years of Maturity, neglect to take hold of the Covenant, and thereby forfeit their interest in it, is a question of more difficulty to resolve, than usefulness when resolved; and therefore I shall pass it by.

For the latter Good, which may be supposed to be necessarily vouchsafed to all that are taken in as Subjects of the Covenant, viz. Saving Grace, I have said so much to it once and again, I need add no more at present; that may suffice that the Premises containing that Good, at least as it is meant of the first Grace, are not made to any in particular, they are made to the Church in general, and answerably secure the Good contained in them only to the Elect; and that hinders not but that God may extend his Covenant in the sense intended to some that are not ele-

eted : But let that suffice for the first thing to be proved.

Secondly, That this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, does not necessarily include or secure to all those to whom it is made, or to whom it does appertain, any further Love and Favour from God that is peculiar and proper to the Elect : as it does not necessarily imply or infer Election, or that all these to whom it is made are elected, and consequently beloved with the Love of Election, so it does not necessarily include or secure any consequent Love or Favour that is peculiar and proper to the Elect. This will appear, if we consider, what Love and Favour is peculiar and proper to the Elect ; and that falls under a twofold consideration. First, As a love of Beneficence. Secondly, As a love of Complacence.

For the first, And thus the Love and Favour of God, as express in a way of Beneficence to the Elect, differs from that common Love and Favour vouchsafed to men in general, only in degree, and those fruits and effects wherein it is express ; 'tis acted more intensely (to speak of God after the manner of men, and according to our shallow apprehensions of him) and in different effects and fruits, than it is acted and expressed towards men in general ; these Effects and Fruits, which we are at present only concerned in, nay in the general be reduced to these three Heads, Regeneration to a State of life, Preservation in that state, and future Glorification. Now none of these Effects and Fruits of the Love and Favour of God are necessarily included in, or secured by this Promise as taken absolutely and by it self, this has been sufficiently proved already : for if the first, viz. Regeneration be not included in, or secured by it, neither of

the two latter can, in as much as they necessarily presuppose the antecedency of this. Now that this first Fruit and Effect of that special Love and Favour of God peculiar and proper to the Elect is not necessarily included in, or secured by this Promise, is sufficiently evident from what has been already said, therefore I shall add no more.

Secondly, For the latter, *viz.* The Love and Favour of God as express in a way of complacency and delight: and under this Head we may comprehend all those things wherein this Love and Favour of God is express, or whereby it is signified to those to whom it is vouchsafed, as the signal manifestations of him self in Christ in his smiles upon the Soul, the shedding abroad of his Love in the heart, and the like. Now that the Love and Favour of God, as express this way, is not necessarily included in, or secured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self, will necessarily follow from what has been already said. The Love and Favour of God to Men always suppose them truly regenerated and sanctified, and consequently cannot be included in, or secured by that Promise in which Regeneration and Sanctification are not included, or by which they are not secured; or least which does not presuppose them already wrought, and is acted and expressed according to the degree of Sanctification attained, to the lively exercise of Grace, due performance of Obedience and the like. Hence those that are truly regenerated, may sink and degenerate in their Sanctification, exercise of Grace, and performance of Obedience, as this Love shall be acted and expressed (if at all, yet in a very low and remiss degree; whereas were it included in, and secured by this Promise, as taken a-

solutely and by it self, it would be acted and expressed always alike towards all, to whom this Promise does appertain: So that to come to a close of this, we may evidently see, that as Interest in this Promise does not universally flow from the electing Love of God, he may make this Promise to some that are not elected, and thereby constitute a true and proper Covenant-relation between himself & them, and answerably vouchsafe them the Token of his Covenant, and by the Application of that to them solemnly admit them into his Church visible; so no further or consequent Love or Favour that is peculiar and proper to the Elect, is necessarily included in, nor secured by that Promise, and consequently (which is the thing asserted) this Promise as taken absolutely and by it self, does not necessarily imply, that all to whom it does appertain, are under, or do enjoy any of that Love and Favour that is peculiar and proper to the Elect, neither is that Love and Favour necessarily included in, or secured by it, to those to whom it does appertain. But that is a second instance to prove what is asserted, viz. That no particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant is either implied in, or secured by this grand Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self to any to whom it does appertain. I had intended to have proceeded somewhat further, but I am loth to be over tedious, and I conceive what has been said may suffice. I suppose it will be granted, that in case neither any of the saving influences and operations of the Spirit, nor any of that special Love and Favour that is peculiar and proper to the Elect, which are two of the most essential Good things of the Covenant, be implied in, or secured to any, to whom this Promise does appertain by it, as taken absolutely and by it self;

then no other Good contained in any other Promise of the Covenant is implied or included in, or secured by it, as so taken : And therefore let that suffice for the second way, how the communications of himself to, and his ~~actings~~ for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of his Covenant-people, whereunto God has obliged himself by this Promise, are limited ; they are limited by the tenour of the Covenant, and of the various Promises contained therein, and consequently, no particular Good contained in any of the Promises of the Covenant, being necessarily implied or included in, or secured by this Promise, as taken absolutely and by it self ; it will undeniably follow that this Promise is only a more general obligation upon God to perform and make good the whole Covenant, yet not absolutely, but according to the true tenour of it, and of the various Promises contained in it : so that as none by virtue of this Promise can lay claim to any Good, but what is somewhere promised, so none can expect any Good promised, but according to the tenour of, and terms upon which the Promise containing such a Good is made. But,

Thirdly, There is another way how the communications of himself to, and his ~~actings~~ for the Good Benefit and Advantage of those this Promise appertains to, whereunto by this Promise God has obliged himself, are limited, and that is the capacity of the Subject to receive, *Unumquodque recipitur secundum modum recipientis.* But this being excentrical to my present design, I shall wholly pass it by. From the whole of what has been hitherto said, as to this second Good or Benefit that the Infant-seed of Believers have by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, we see what the Token of the Covenant, as ap-

plied to them by reference and relation to, and therein what Promises of the Covenant appertain to them, and also what is the Good contained in, and consequently granted to, or settled upon them by those Promises, and that was the first thing enquired into. Now as a close of this, and before I proceed to the second enquiry, I conceive it is necessary that I should reflect a little back, and sum up and give a distinct and particular account of what Good the Infant-seed of Believers have, as received with their Parents into the Covenant of Grace, and as having in particular those Promises aforementioned made unto them; and also add something further to prove that they indeed have all that Good, as so received into Covenant, and as having those Promises made to them: As for the Good they have, that is fourfold.

First, They are put into a New-Covenant-state, they are absolutely for the present removed from under the Covenant of Works, or the Covenant entred with Man in the state of Innocency, and taken into, as the actual Subjects of, the second Covenant, or Covenant of Grace; that is their present state, they are actually under the Covenant of Grace, and as the necessary effect and consequence thereof are freed and discharged from the guilt and condemning power of Original sin.

Secondly, They have at present true real and proper interest and propriety in God: as they are his, so he is theirs, there is a mutual property and interest in each other.

Thirdly, They have God under an actual obligation, viz. of his Promise to improve and employ all his Attributes for their Good Benefit and Advantage according, or in a way agreeable to the true te-

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nour of the Covenant and of the various Promises  
of it.

Fouthly, They have a present Interest in, and Right to  
Salvation, and answerably, in case of their death before  
a forfeiture be made of that their Interest and Right,  
they shall be infallibly saved. This Promise of Salva-  
tion being made to them as the Seed of believing Pa-  
rents, requires nothing on their part to the injoyment  
of the Good contained in it; and God having ingaged  
by Promise to be a God unto them, he has thereby  
obliged himself to make good this Promise to them:  
Now though upon supposition that the Covenant and  
Promises thereof appertaining to the Seed of Belie-  
vers be entred with, and made to them definitely,  
that is, with and to each one in particular, ( which  
that they are, has been before proved, and is now ta-  
ken for granted ) I cannot apprehend how it can  
with any shew of reason be denied, but must necessa-  
rily be granted, that they have all that Good now de-  
clared and assigned to them; and consequently any  
further proof may seem to be superfluous; yet ex  
abundanti, I shall add these three or four Arguments.

Arg. I. First what Good is, either according to  
the literal and most proper sense and signification of  
the words, contained in these Promises of the Cova-  
enant, or does necessarily and inseparably arise and  
flow from the very establishment of the Covenant with  
the Infant-seed of Believers, that Good they have, as  
received thereunto with their Parents, and as having  
those Promises made unto them: but all that Good  
aforementioned, either according to the literal or most  
proper sense and signification of the words, is contain-  
ed in the Promises of the Covenant, or else does neces-  
sarily and inseparably arise and flow from the very  
establishment

establishment of the Covenant with the Seed of believing Parents; therefore they have all that Good as received into the Covenant with their Parents, and as having these Promises made unto them. Both these Propositions carry their own evidence with so much clearness; that I need add nothing for the confirmation of either of them. Certainly when God promises to be a God to the Seed of his People, according to the literal and most proper sense and signification of these words, he means himself, and to interpret that Promise of any lower Good would be to offer apparent violence to it; and the like may be said of the Promise of Salvation, and that a New-Covenant-state, Propriety and Interest in God, with an obligation upon him to improve all his Attributes for the Good, Benefit and Advantage of those to whom the Promise is made, and a Right to Salvation, do necessarily arise and flow from the very establishment of the Covenant, and making these Promises with, or to any, whether Infants or Aduit, will as I suppose be questioned by none: And therefore

*Arg. 2.* Secondly, If believing Parents have all that Good as received into Covenant, and as having those Promises made unto them; then so have their Infant-seed, they being alike received into Covenant, and having the same Promises made alike to them: but the former is true; therefore the latter.

The antecedent is secured from any opposition not only by evidence of Scripture light, but by the universal acknowledgment of all Christians; neither do I see any ground from Scripture, or right Reason to doubt of the consequence: This is undoubted to me, that Pædo-Baptists assign one kind of Good to Parents and another to Infants, while yet they plead

for Infants having the same Interest in the Covenant and these grand Promises of it that Parents have, has not a little promoted the error of Anti-Pædo-Baptism. But

*Arg. 3.* Thirdly, Unless the Infant-seed of believing Parents have that Good afore declared, they have no interest at all in the Covenant : but the Infant-seed of believing Parents have a true and real interest in the Covenant ; *Ergo.*

The consequence in the *Major Proposition* will not be questioned by Pædo-Baptists, for whose sake I now write as well as for the sake of Anti-Pædo-Baptists : But that is evident thus.

Those that have no Good, that is of the essence and substance of the Covenant, have no present interest in the Covenant : but unless Infants have that Good afore declared, they have no Good that is of the essence and substance of the Covenant ; *Ergo.* This Argument in the whole of it is so obvious to every ordinary understanding, at least will so evidently appear upon a diligent search, that I shall surcease the proof it, and only add one more Argument, and proceed to the second enquiry.

*Arg. 4.* If the Infant-seed of Believers, as received into Covenant, and as having those Promises made to them, have not the Good afore express, then the Covenant would be no security to any of them, nor any ground of hope to their Parents as to their future happiness in case of their death in their pure Infant-state, before they have personally taken hold of the Covenant themselves : but the Covenant is some security to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, and may be some ground of hope to their Parents as to their future happiness in case of their death in their pure Infant-state,

state; Ergo. If the Seed of Believers have neither a discharge from the guilt of Original sin, nor any Propriety or Interest in God, nor Right to Salvation by the Covenant and Promises thereof entred with, or made to them; how is it possible that either the Covenant or any Promise of it should be any security to them, or any ground of hope to their Parents that they shall be saved in case of death in their pure Infant-state? and if they have no security, nor their Parents any ground of hope as to their future happiness from the Covenant, then the Covenant and Promises would be wholly insignificant, and of no use or advantage at all either to Parents or Children, in respect of all those that die in that state; and how considerable a part of the Seed of Believers as well as of others die in that state, is known to all men. But now it seems to be altogether unreasonable to imagine that God should extend his Covenant to the Seed of his People, and seal it by an outward Sign or Token, and yet neither the Covenant nor any one Premise of it be of any use or advantage at all, either to Parents or Children in respect of so great a part of their Seed. From all I conceive it will undeniably follow, that the Infant-seed of Believers and that universally have, as received into Covenant, and having these two grand Promises of it in special made unto them as the Seed of such Parents, the whole Good afore declared: as for their state, they are actually under the Covenant of Grace, and have an absolute discharge from the guilt of Original sin; as the inseparable effect and consequence thereof, they have a present actual propriety in God; he is their God, and as such under an obligation to make good unto them the whole Covenant according to the true tenour of it; they have a present Right

Right to future Salvation, and answerably under an infallible certainty of enjoying it, supposing their non-forfeiture of that their Right, which during their pure Infant-state they are incapable to do. But to proceed.

Secondly, Wherein does the Good of having the Covenant with the Promises thereof appertaining to them ratified, sealed and confirmed to the Infant-seed of Believers by an outward Sign or Token consist?

As previous to the resolution of this question, two things may be observed in general.

First, That Adult-Believers are equally and alike concerned in it with Infants; inasmuch as whatever Good the Adults have by the ratification, sealing and confirmation of the Covenant and Promises thereof unto them, the same Good have Infants by the sealing, ratification and confirmation of the Covenant and Promises thereof by an outward Sign and Token unto them, and so *vice versa*.

Secondly, That to have the Covenant and Promises of it ratified, sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign and Token, is a Good, is sufficiently secured by the very Institution of a Sign and Token for that end and purpose, taken in conjunction with the Wisdom and Goodness of God instituting: an Infinite wise and good God would not institute an outward Sign and Token for such an end and purpose, did it not, as serving to that end and purpose, conduce to the Good and Benefit of his People whether Infants or Adult; so that it is a Good, is certain, though we should not fully apprehend wherein that Good does consist: But more particularly and directly to the question.

The great Good of having the Covenant and Promises ratified, sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign

Sign or Token, I conceive, consists in the additional assurance given unto Men thereby of their injoyment of that Good granted to, and settled upon them by the Covenant and Promises; for though it is certain the verity and faithfulness of God is a full and infallible assurance unto Men of their injoyment of whatever Good is covenanted and promised to them, supposing the performance of what duty is required on their parts, he is a God *that cannot lye*; but yet the ratification and confirmation of the Covenant and Promises by an outward Sign is, *quoad homines*, an additional assurance to them that they shall enjoy that Good. The case is one and the same, both in respect of the confirmation by a Seal and Token, and by an Oath, the Promises as absolutely considered, were as sure and certain before the Oath of God was given as after, yet the Apostle tells us that God confirmed his Promise with an Oath, and shews the Good designed to us thereby, *viz.* *That we might have more strong Consolation*, Heb. 6. 16, 17, 18. God deals with Men after the manner of Men, and with respect to their present state of Imperfection. Now the addition of a Seal does add to the confirmation of any Promises or Contracts among Men, and gives greater assurance of the performance of them, and consequently of their injoyment of the Good promised to whom or with whom such Promises and Contracts are made, than they would do were there no Seal annexed: hence we may say, that the Covenant and Promises of God as taken absolutely in themselves, without consideration to their Author, are strengthened and confirmed by the Seal or Token annexed, and consequently the Seal or Token is a further assurance to those with or to whom they are made that they shall

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shall enjoy the Good covenanted and promised : and besides, while the People of God are in this state of Imperfection, their Knowledge and Faith are imperfect, they are apt to frame their notions of God by what they see and experience among Men ; hence the adding of a Seal or Token to the Covenant is of great advantage to their Faith.

*Object.* If any shall say, It's true, to have the Covenant and Promises thereof sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign or Token is in this respect a great Good to Adult-Believers, who have a capacity to reflect upon the Sign or Token, and improve it for the advantage of their Faith ; but what does this concern Infants, who can make no such use or improvement of it as applyed to them ? and then what Good is it to them, or wherein does the Good of its being applyed to them consist ? Supposing the Promises to appertain to them, they of themselves are an infallible security to them as to their injowment of the Good promised, and as for the Sign and Token, as they have no Faith to strengthen, so had they any, yet they are utterly incapable of making any improvement of it to that purpose.

To that I shall only say : First, that the Covenant and Promises, as entred with and made to them, taken absolutely in themselves, being ratified, sealed and confirmed by an outward Sign or Token, the Good contained in them is more fully ascertained and assured to them. But,

Secondly, Let it be observed what reference and subserviency according to the revealed will of God the Application of the Token of the Covenant to Infants has to his continuing unto them their Covenant-state, and answerably vouchsafing them the Good covenanted and promised to them : The Lord himself

tells *Abraham*, that the *Man-child* that was not circumcised had broken the *Covenant*, Gen. 17. 14. Whether that will prove that the Infant-seed of the People of God their having the Token of the *Covenant* applyed to them, and bearing it, be an indispenſible condition of their holding their *Covenant*-interest and State, and injoying the Good promised, I shall not determine; only this may be said, that the bare privation or want of Circumcision was not to be accounted a breach of the *Covenant*; for then all dying before the eighth day had been deprived of the Benefit of the *Covenant*, and consequently *David* could not have comforted himself by that Consideration, that he should go to his *Child*, and not it return to him, says *Gerhard*, *Eam (scil.) comminationem quæ de Circumcisione extat*, Gen. 17. 14. *Non ad casum privationis, sed ad contemptum Sacramenti pertinere*; but whether the neglect of it from error as well as contempt, might not be of such a fatal consequence to the *Child*, will appear at that day, when things now hidden are brought to light. This must be added, that 'tis a passage might justly make the hearts not only of Contemners, but of all Neglecters of Infant-Baptism to tremble; we know not but that God may have made the Application of the Token of the *Covenant* to the Infant-seed of his People absolutely necessary to his continuing his *Covenant* to them, and to his vouchsafing them the Benefits of it; he may establish his *Covenant* upon what terms himself pleases; and if this should be found true, it is easie to apprehend how much the interest of the Seed of Believers in the *Covenant* and Promises is strengthened by the Application of the Token of the *Covenant* to them, and consequently how great a Good it is to them:

The sprinkling of the bloud of the Paschal Lamb up-  
on the door-posts of the houses of the *Israelites* could  
not be improved by any of their first-born who were  
yet in their pure Infant-state, yet was necessary to  
their security from the destroying Angel: there may  
be an indispensible connexion between some duties  
and the injoyment of Good promised, the reason of  
which lyes in the alone Will and Pleasure of God, at  
least is reserved as a secret in his own brest: Two  
things are plain to me, and a third is doubtful.

First, 'Tis plain to me, that in case the Seed of Believers have no interest in the Covenant, nor are to have the Token of it applyed, Parents have no other ground in Scripture for their hope that they shall reap any of the saving Benefits purchased by Christ, at least that dye in their Infancy, then may be acted with reference to the Seed of the worst of Heathens.

Secondly, This is alike plain to me, that all the Seed of Believers through their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof and having the Token of the Covenant applyed to them, do, supposing their death in their pure Infant-state, infallibly injoy all those Blessings and Benefits.

Thirdly, This is doubtful to me, how God will deal with, and what is the case of their Infant-seed, who through the darkness of their understandings disclaim their Interest in the Covenant, and neglect thereupon to apply the Token of the Covenant to them; I would hope the best, but I must say the Scriptures to me give more ground of fear than of hope.

In the last place it must be considered, that the Token of the Covenant is applyed to the Infant-seed of Believers not only with reference to their Good and

Benefi-

Benefit during their pure Infant-state, but also with reference to their Good as they grow up to years of Maturity, when they are capable of making an improvement of it ; and how great it may be, and, if they were instructed in the use they are to make of it, it will be then unto them, shall if the Lord will be shewed under the next general Head. But before I proceed to that, some doubts that may arise from, and some Objections that may seem to oppose what has been hitherto said, must be satisfied and removed out of the way. We have seen a twofold Good and Benefit that the Infant-seed of Believers have by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them. First, They have thereby a solemn admission and incorporation into the visible Body, Kingdom or Family of Christ, whereunto, and as the ground of which, they are supposed and granted, yea affirmed to have a Political or Relative Union with Christ the Head. Secondly, They have thereby the Covenant with the Promises thereof sealed and confirmed to them in the ratification of the Covenant ; they have consequently a discharge and immunity from the guilt and condemning power of Original sin sealed and confirmed to them in the ratification and confirmation of the Promises ; they have a present interest and propriety in God, and right to future Salvation sealed and confirmed to them.

## C H A P. VIII.

Several Objections answered. The first raised from the impossibility that God should do so much for the Seed of Believers, and yet not regenerate them. That answered, and the contrary thereunto shewed to be highly rational. The second is, that what they have is only according to a visible appearance, but not in reality and truth. That answered, where it is shewed what they appear or seem to have, they must needs have in reality and truth. The third raised from the inconsistency of granting the Infant-seed of Believers so much with the Doctrine of Saint's Perseverance. That fully answered. The fourth raised from the inconsistency of granting so much to all the Seed of Believers with the Doctrine of Election. That fully answered. The fifth is, that the Infants of Believers have nothing beyond what the Seed of others have. That briefly answered.

- Obj. I. Possibly some, notwithstanding all that hath been said, will yet urge utter improbability that God should proceed so far in the expressions of his Grace and Love to the Infant-seed of his People, and grant them so great and so many Priviledges,

as hath been affirmed he doth, and yet not regenerate and sanctifie them, if not in their Infancy, yet as they grow up to years of Maturity ; and consequently the Baptism of Infants, as grounded upon a supposition of their being Confederats with their Parents in the Covenant of Grace, will very probably prove, or rather absolutely necessitate the Doctrine of falling from, and losing saving Grace, and overthrow the Doctrine of Saints Perseverance. And may be they will say, this may be rationally concluded on a fourfold ground yet unanswered.

1. That it is utterly improbable that any should have an union with Christ, a discharge from the guilt of Original sin, a propriety in God, be owned by him as his People, and have an actual right to Salvation, who are not regenerated and sanctified.

2. That it is alike utterly improbable that God should expels so much Grace and Love to, do so much for, and confer so great Priviledges and Benefits upon any that he hath not elected, nor ever intended to bring to Salvation ; but on the other hand purposed to, and answerably doth leave them to themselves to be fitted by their own sin and apostacy as vessels of wrath and destruction.

3. That it is alike improbable that any should be in Covenant with the Holy Ghost, and yet have no benefit by him, either in regard of his saving Operations, or any other Operations that have a direct tendency to their future Salvation.

4. That the Token of the Covenant hath such a reference to Regeneration and Sanctification, as that doth, if not necessarily, yet very probably prove that they are, at least shall be regenerated and sanctified, who have *coram Deo* a right to it.

*Answe.* Though I conceive this Objection hath been sufficiently obviated by what hath been already said, yet seeing the grounds it is bottomed upon are plausible, and have a seeming weight in them, I shall speak a little more to it, and shall

1. Shew the insufficiency of these grounds to prove what is inferred and concluded from them.

2. I shall shew the rationality, yea necessariness, (*Consideratis considerandis*) that God should proceed so far in his vouchsements to the Infant-seed of his People, and yet not proceed to their universal Regeneration, or Sanctification, nor nor absolutely oblige himself to regenerate or sanctifie any of them. To begin with the

1. First, And thus the insufficiency of these grounds will appear by a distinct consideration of them.

1. Then what is said, *viz.* that in case God hath done so much for, and vouchsafed so much to the Infant-seed of Believers as hath been affirmed, then it may seem utterly improbable but that he should regenerate and sanctifie them : for can it be imagined that God should grant unto any an union with Christ, discharge them from the guilt of sin, bring them so nigh to, and give them a propriety in himself, and a right to future Salvation, who are not renewed and sanctified ; but on the other hand are in their natural pollution, deprived of his Image, initiated and corrupted with the seeds and principles of all manner of sin ? will an infinitely holy God do all that for unholy ones, for those that are unregenerated, spiritually dead, and in their blood ? Sure it cannot be ; either they must be regenerated, and at least the seeds and habits of Grace wrought in them, or no

such

such Priviledges can be rationally supposed to be granted to them.

*Answ.* Were but the thoughts and imaginations of men wholly subdued unto Christ, no other reply were necessary, save only what our Lord Christ made to him that murmured, when those that came last into the Vineyard had an equal reward with those that came first, Mat. 20. 15. *Is it not lawful to do what he will with his own?* Shall any man's eye be evil, because he is good? If God will do so much for the Infant-seed of his People, though it goes no farther, who can with any shew of reason except against him? may have not all cause to admire and adore his goodness and condescension. Shall vain man undertake to dictate unto God, or injoyn him his way? And therefore this may well be dismisse as wholly insufficient to prove the conclusion inferred from it. I shall therefore only add; If we consider the infinite Goodness of God to sinners, yea Adult as well as Infants, and that it is only during their Infant-state, or before the habits and principles of sin exert themselves in outward gross acts to an apostatizing from him that all this is done for, and vouchsafed to them; as also that what he doth for them is in a peculiar manner out of love and respect to their Parents; we should soon see this is so far from being improbable, that it is rather highly probable.

2. To the second thing pleaded, namely the improbability that God should go so far, and vouchsafe so great Priviledges to those that he hath not elected, or appointed to Salvation, and whom, after he hath done so much for, he will yet leave to themselves, and suffer them to fall away and finally perish. And thus it may be said, if God bears no other love to them than

he doth to the Non-elect, why doth he do so much for them, and grant them so great Priviledges? if he doth bear a greater love to them than he bears to the rest of Mankind, why doth he leave them to themselves, and suffer them to forfeit the Priviledges he hath afore vouchsafed to them?

*Answe.* I cannot apprehend why this should be looke<sup>t</sup> upon at all as improbable, especially if we consider these three or four things.

1. What a blessed state Man at his first Creation was put into; how great Priviledges were granted to him, and to all Mankind in him; and yet we know God did after suffer him to fall, and all Mankind in him.

2. If we consider how much God doth still for, and how great Priviledges he still vouchsafes to the Non-elect, as well as the Elect, and that in a subservency to their future Salvation. And what is pleaded to evince the improbability of God's going so far, and doing so much for the Non-elect Seed of Believers, and yet after leaving them to themselves, may with the like strength of reason be pleaded against his doing so much for, and granting such Priviledges to the Adult, who are not elected, and answerably who are left to the blindness of their own minds, and hardness of their own hearts to their final ruine and destruction. This is undeniable, that as for the external means of Salvation, with various Priviledges and Advantages subordinate thereunto, they are indifferently vouchsafed both to the Elect and the Non-elect. How great and how many Priviledges and Advantages had the Jews in general subserving their Salvation, and yet how great a number of them appertained not to the election of Grace, is known unto all. And hence,

3. That

3. That God should do so much for, and vouchsafe so great Priviledges to the Seed of Believers in general, and that with a direct reference to their future Salvation, though many among them appertain not to the election of Grace, will appear less improbable, if we consider the rationality that God should do more, and vouchsafe greater Priviledges and Advantages unto them, and that with reference to their Salvation, than he doth for, and vouchsafe to the rest of Mankind. The peculiar Love and Favour he bears to his People makes this very rational, yea, I may say, somewhat necessary. It cannot be rationally supposed, but that, when God bears so great a love to Parents, he should do somewhat more, and vouchsafe greater Advantages to their Seed, in a subservency to their future Salvation, than he doth for, and vouchsafes to others. And yet

4. This will seem less improbable, if we consider that in what God doth for, and vouchsafes to the Seed of his People, he hath a peculiar respect to the Elect among them. 'Tis in special for their sakes that the Priviledges of the Seed of Believers are so great. It hath pleased God to make his choice of Persons to Salvation very much in the lines of particular Persons; hence he usually casts Elect Children upon Elect Parents; though he hath left a liberty to himself to pass by whom he pleaseth, and sometimes to take in such who are of the lines and posterity of the wicked; yet his Election lies very much in and among the Seed of Elect Parents, and for their sakes, and in a subservency to their Salvations, he doth so much for, and vouchsafes so great Priviledges to the Seed of his People in general. That all the Seed of Believers should have been elected to Salvation, would have been attended

with great inconveniences, and that upon divers accounts, as might easily be shewed ; yet it hath pleased God to lay his Election very much among them. 'Tis rare but that some one or more of the Seed of believing Parents evidence their Election by a personal taking hold of the Covenant, as they grow up to years of Maturity. Yea it is sometimes found, that all the Seed of some believing Parents give good ground to hope they are such as God hath ordained to life. Now with respect to them, and for their sakes God hath done so much, and vouchsafed so great Priviledges to their Seed in general : so that all things considered, that God should grant the Priviledges assigned to the Seed of Believers, and yet after leave some of them to themselves, and suffer them to forfeit their own Mercies, and finally perish, carries not the least improbability in it.

3. For that which may yet further be pleaded, viz. The improbability that any should be in Covenant with the holy Spirit, and yet have no benefit by him, either in regard of any saving, no, nor any common operations that have a direct conducency to their future Salvation. To that I would say in the general, that how improbable soever this may seem to be, yet no sound Argument can be drawn therefrom, to prove the Conclusion inferred in the forementioned Objection. God may receive the Infant-seed of Believers into Covenant with himself, and that universally, and youchsafe them all the Good and all the Priviledges afore assigned to them, and yet it will not necessarily follow from thence, that any such Operations of the Spirit should be granted to them. This is evident from what hath been already said, yea let me

*say*

say, this is no way improbable. This will appear, if we consider two or three things.

1. What interest and hand the Spirit of God hath in all that is done for, and vouchsafed to them; hence it cannot be said they have no benefit by him. This might be abundantly evidenced, but that I should enlarge this discourse quite beyond the bounds designed for it: And therefore

2. Consider the special office and work of the Spirit; and thus we shall find the office and work of the Spirit more especially relate to the fitting and preparing the Elect unto Glory, through their Sanctification, and cheerful performance of holy obedience unto God in Christ, *2 Thess. 2. 13.* with *1 Pet. 1. 2.* Now it is vastly more improbable, that the Spirit should perform any part of that work whereunto he is designed for the preparing vessels of Mercy unto Glory upon the hearts of the Non-elect, than that, though in Covenant with him, he should suspend the performance of that work in or upon them: Especially if we consider

3. What hath been already said, *viz.* That the Promises of the Covenant constituting a Covenant-relation between God, both absolutely and personally considered, and the Seed of Believers, as taken absolutely and by themselves only, oblige the several persons in the divine essence to act for their Good, Benefit and Advantage, according to the tenour of the Covenant, that is according to the distinct Promises of the Covenant, and the terms or conditions upon which they are made. Now there being no Promise made to the individual Infants of Believers, assuring them of any such Operations of the Spirit, hence the Spirit is under no obligation to vouchsafe them to this

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or that individual Infant, antecedent to their personal taking hold of the Covenant ; which that the Elect shall do, is secured as by the Covenant between the Father and the Son ; so by those indefinite Promises of divine teachings and the like, made to the Church in general, of which before ; so that here is yet nothing improbable.

4. And lastly, That which is pleaded to countenance the Conclusion in the Objection, is the reference that the Token of the Covenant, whether Circumcision, or Baptism, had or hath to Regeneration and Sanctification. And thus it is supposed by many to have such a reference as lays a sure ground for the Conclusion, viz. that in case Infants have such an union with Christ, and Covenant-relation unto, and interest in God as intitles them to the Token of the Covenant, they must be granted to be regenerated, and thereby initially sanctified.

*Answ.* That the Token of the Covenant hath some reference to Regeneration and Sanctification is evident from those Texts usually insisted upon; *John 3.5.* *Eph. 5. 26.* *Tit. 3. 5.* but what that reference is, is not agreed on by all. Some say it is an outward Sign or Symbol of Regeneration, and consequently an evidence of the Party's present Regeneration to whom it is applyed, and sometimes it is called by the men of this persuasion a Seal of Regeneration. Others attribute the conferring of the holy Spirit to it, by whom Regeneration is wrought, and so they conceive the Spirit is ordinarily communicated, if not by, yet in a concomitancy with the Application of the Token of the Covenant, by means whereof at least the Seeds and Principles of Regeneration, at least some kind of disposition leading thereunto, are wrought

wrought in all that have it rightfully applyed to them. Now I shall not stay upon a particular discussion of these different apprehensions of Men. It may suffice to shew that the Token of the Covenant may have and hath a true and proper reference to Regeneration, on the account of which those allusions to it, made use of by Christ, and the Apostle in the places forementioned, are genuine and proper ; and yet the Conclusion pleaded for cannot be rationally inferred therefrom. And thus we may allow the Token of the Covenant to have a twofold reference to Regeneration and Sanctification.

1. It is significative of both, as the way through which the Elect are prepared for, and brought into Glory. Hence that Allusion requires not that Regeneration antecede, nor yet that the Spirit be conferred by, or in a concomitancy with the Application of the Token of the Covenant, it only supposeth the Token to be of such use, *viz.* to signify and represent the way through which God doth bring his Elect to Salvation ; and it is only a Sign of present Regeneration to the Adult, as the Application of it to them doth suppose them Heirs of Salvation that way, *viz.* through Regeneration and renewing of the Spirit ; but in respect of those that are Heirs another way, *viz.* through the Promise made to them as the Seed of such Parents, it only signifies and represents the way how they shall, supposing them ordained thereunto, be brought to Salvation ; but whether they are already regenerated, or yet to be regenerated, cannot be determined from that Allusion.

2. The Token of the Covenant refers to Regeneration as it is a seal and confirmation of the Promises of Regeneration ; but then it can only seal and confirm those

those Promises according to their nature and tenour, and consequently the Promises being only indefinite, respecting the Seed of Believers in general, as Members of the visible Church, the sealing and confirmation must be answerable. And thus it shall be granted, that God by the Token of the Covenant as applied to the Seed of his People, doth seal and confirm unto them those Promises of divine teachings, putting his Laws in the minds, and writing them in the hearts of their Seed. Hence the Promise *Deut. 30.6.* is expressed in that phrase, *I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed*; plainly shewing that Circumcision (and the same is true of Baptism) hath some reference to the Conversion and Regeneration of their Seed; and that was this; it did seal and confirm the Promises concerning the Conversion and Regeneration of their Seed, which Promises being (as I have said) only indefinite, the sealing must needs be proportionable: So that though we grant, yea affirm, that the Infant-seed of Believers have all that Good, and all those Privileges afore express vouchsafed to them, yet it will not necessarily follow, neither can it be certainly concluded from thence, that they are, or shall be truly regenerated or sanctified. God may proceed so far in the expressions of his Grace and Love to them, and yet there is no necessity he should proceed to their Regeneration or Sanctification; nor yet oblige himself thereunto. As for those preparatory Operations of the Spirit, whereby some kind of predispositions towards a work of Grace, or a *posse agere* are wrought in them, though I conceive they may be granted without prejudice to those great Doctrines of special Grace and Perseverance; seeing it is certain, there are many common works of the

Spirit

Spirit granted to those that never attain to true Grace, yet I conceive it is not necessary, that we do hold them to be granted to all the Infant-seed of Believers, no not to all, yea or any of the Elect among them. God may take the Infant-seed of his People into Covenant with himself together with their Parents, and thereby set them free from the condemning power of Original sin, put himself under an obligation to act as a God towards them, according to the tenour of the Covenant into which they are taken, appoint the Token of the Covenant to be applyed to them, and thereby admit them into the Church or Kingdom of Christ as visible, and vouchsafe them all those Priviledges of his Church aforementioned, and yet not vouchsafe them any Operations of the Spirit whether special or common.

2. That it is very rational to suppose, that though God hath expressed his Grace and Love to the Infant-seed of his People in all those glorious vouchsafements before expressed, yet that he should not proceed to their universal Regeneration and Sanctification, but should leave to himself a liberty, savingly to work upon whom he pleaseth, in a complyance with his eternal Purpose and Decree, and that when, and by what means he pleaseth, as himself sees meet. This will appear from a threefold Consideration,

1. First, That it is altogether unreasonable to suppose, yea morally impossible, that God should constitute a conditional Covenant between himself and Men, whether Infants or Adult, and yet should include the condition required of Men in, and thereby secure their performance of it by any Promise that is of the essence and substance of the Covenant as so considered. This is evident from what hath been already said, for this

this would quite alter and change the nature of the Covenant, it would not then be a conditional, and consequently any Covenant at all in a proper sense, but an absolute Covenant, or rather a *compendium*, or *synopsis* of absolute Promises. And besides, persons must be supposed to have an Interest in the Covenant, before the condition of their Interest is performed by them, which (as I have said) is an absolute contradiction. Hence it will undeniably follow, that the Promises of the first Grace are not of the essence of the Covenant as conditionally made with particular persons, but appertain to the Covenant, as made with the Church or House of *Israel* collectively considered, and secure to the Elect the Grace required on Man's part to his admission into, or continuance in the Covenant, as conditionally made with particular Persons.

- 2. Consider how rational it is to suppose that God should (as it is certain he doth) require something of duty from Parents towards their Children, or something of duty from Children themselves, if not from both; upon the performance of, or failing in which he should continue, or discontinue their Covenant-state when they grow up to years of Maturity. The rationality of this supposal appears from the conformity and agreeableness of his so doing, to his dealings with all those he either offers his Covenant to, or enters Covenant with. Take it of Unbelievers to whom the Covenant is offered, there is something of duty required on their parts in order to their reception into Covenant, they are to take hold of it. Take it of Believers with whom the Covenant is actually entered; thus. There is no good promised, but something of duty is required on their parts

In order to the enjoymēt of it, and upon their non-performance of that duty, they may be and usually are deprived of it : And why should it not be alike rational, that God should require somewhat of duty from them towards their Children, upon the non-performance of which he should withhold the Good promised, or should *not bring upon them* (as God speaks concerning *Abrahām*) the Good promised ? Yes in order to the continuance of that Covenant-state between God and themselves, there is somewhat of duty required on their parts, the performance of which, it's true, is secured to them another way ; but however duty is required on their parts, upon their non-performance of which ( might we suppose that possible ) their Covenant-state would be discontinued, or they would be cast out of Covenant. And why should it not be alike rational for God to require somewhat of duty from Children themselves, in order to the continuance of their Covenant-state, when they grow up to a capacity of performing it, which that they shall universally do, it is no way necessary should be secured to them, as we may see more by and by. So that God's dealings with reference to the Seed of Believers are altogether rational, as suiting with his dealings with all Men to whom he offers his Covenant, or with whom he doth actually establish it.

3. Consider, that in case either God had not proceeded so far in extending his Covenant and Promises, and thereby vouchsafing to the Infant-seed of his People that Good and those Priviledges afore declared ; or had proceeded further, viz. to their universal Regeneration, or to the securing it unto them ;

one of these inconveniences would have necessarily followed thereupon, either

1. No Infants must have dyed in their Infancy, which yet that innumerable do, our dayly observation assures us: Or else,

2. All Infants dying in their Infancy must have eternally perished, and been everlastingl<sup>y</sup> separated from the presence of God and the glory of his Power: Or,

3. In case any were saved, it must be, not by vertue of the Covenant of Grace entred with, or any Promise made unto them, but merely from an absolute power and prerogative in God to save or condemn whom he will of fallen Mankind, without respect had to the Covenant of Grace established in the Blood of Christ: Or,

4. All the Seed of Believers, whether dying in their Infancy, or living to years of Maturity, must infallibly be saved: Or,

Lastly, Some might be truly regenerated, and have a saving work of Grace upon their hearts, and yet after finally fall away and eternally perish. In case he should not have extended his Covenant to the Seed of his People, as our Opposers imagine, or if he had extended it to them definitely, and yet they should not have had that Good, and those Priviledges pleaded for; then one of the three former inconveniences would have followed: or if having so extended his Covenant to them, he should thereby have obliged himself to work Grace in them universally; then the one or the other of the two latter inconveniences would have followed.

Obj. But it may be said, the Covenant and Promises may be made indefinitely with, and to the Seed of Believers,

Believers, and then none of these inconveniences will follow.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* To that I answer. I have before proved that they do appertain to them definitely; or suppose we should grant them to appertain to them only indefinitely, yet this inconveniency would follow, viz. That as the Covenant gives no assurance that any of their Infants (who have one or more surviving their pure Infant-state, and growing up to years of Maturity) dying in their Infancy shall be saved: So Parents have no certain ground to hope that any one of theirs so dying are saved. That none have any certain ground to hope for what the Covenant gives no assurance of, will be readily granted on all hands. Now suppose the Covenant or Promises are entred with, and made to the Seed of Believers only indefinitely, that they give no assurance that all, yea or any of the Seed of such Believers dying in their Infancy shall be saved, will evidently appear thus; because the Covenant may stand firm, and the Promises of it fully accomplished in the Conversion and Salvation of some one or more of those that survive their Infant-state, and grow up to years of Maturity. And hence by the way, how can a supposal of that be a sufficient ground for the Application of the Token of the Covenant, of which the Covenant gives no assurance? And further I conceive, it will and must be granted by those that conceive the Covenant is entred only indefinitely with the Seed of Believers, that it gives assurance of Salvation to Infants dying in their Infancy, only so far as it gives assurance to them of Regeneration in their Infancy. Now it is evident that the Covenant gives no assurance of Regeneration to any of the Seed of Believers in their pure Infant-state: If it give assurance

to any of Regeneration in that state, it is either as they are Elect, or as they are the Seed of such Parents, or by virtue of some Revelation that God hath made in his Word, that he will regenerate, at least some of the Seed of his People, as having the Covenant so entered with them in their Infancy : But now it is evident,

1. That the Covenant doth not assure any of Regeneration in their Infancy, as they are Elect, for then all the Elect Seed of Believers should be regenerated in their Infancy ; the contrary whereunto is evident, in that many of the Seed of Believers, in whom there is not the least shew or appearance of Grace from their very Infancy till they come to full age, yea possibly till they come to old age, are yet at last converted and brought to a saving close with Christ. To say that these might have a work of Grace in their Infancy will be attended with too bad consequences than to be granted, without better proof than I suppose can be brought.

2. That the Covenant doth not give assurance of Regeneration to the Seed of Believers in their Infancy, as such, will, I doubt not, be readily granted without further proof.

3. That God hath no where revealed that he would regenerate any of the Seed of his People in their Infancy, is sufficiently proved from the utter silence of the Scriptures as to any such Revelation. And for any to plead experience or observation in this case, that can signify but little, inasmuch as that Grace some of the Seed of Believers have, of the time or means, when or whereby it was wrought, they can give no account ; it might yet be wrought either by Parental Instruction, or some other means vouch-

safed consequent to their pure Infant-state. Now then the Covenant giving no assurance of the Regeneration of any of the Seed of Believers in their pure Infant-state, it gives no assurance of any of their Salvation, and consequently Parents have no certain ground to bottom a hope upon, that any of theirs dying in their Infant-state are saved. All the hope they can have hath only a possibility, or at utmost a probability for its foundation ; and that, it may be too, weakened by a greater probability of the contrary, it seeming vastly more rational to me to suppose, that, in case the Covenant were entred with them only indefinitely, seeing God hath given no assurance that he would regenerate any in their Infancy, and in doing it when they come to years of Maturity, he makes good his Promise as fully, as though he did it in their Infancy ; he should suffer those that he hath ordained to Salvation to live to years of Maturity, and answerably bring them to Glory according to his ordinary way, viz. through *Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth, called thereunto by the Gospel,* than that he should go out of his ordinary way, and regenerate them immediately by his Spirit, without the subser-  
vency of any outward means, especially considering what inconveniences would attend, through the corruption of Men, a supposition of his so doing, and consequently that believing Parents, if they must not mourn as those that have no hope, yet they could not but mourn, as having but little hope. But now according to the way that I have proceeded in, allowing the Covenant and Promises to be entred and made to the Seed of Believers definitely, and allowing them to have all that Good assigned to them by virtue of their Interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof,

and yet bounding that Good, as I have done, unspeakable. Good accrues to them by that their Covenant-interest, and the Application of the Token of the Covenant, and yet none of these inconveniences ensue thereupon. From the whole of what hath been said, as we see it cannot be rationally concluded, that, in case God goes so far in the expressions of his Love and Grace to the Seed of his People, as to grant them that Good, those Priviledges and Benefits, as hath been declared he doth, that then he must necessarily go further, and actually regenerate and sanctifie them, either in their Infancy, or as they grow up to years of Maturity: So that it is very rational to suppose that he should go so far, as hath been exprest, and yet should go no further, but should reserve a liberty to himself, as to regenerate and sanctifie whom he pleaseth, so to do it when, and by what means himself pleaseth.

And from all, I conceive, an Argument might be drawn, an answer unto which would (if I mistake not) be clogged with no small difficulties, both to prove the Covenant-interest of the Seed of Believers, and the dueness of the Application of the Token thereof to them upon the account thereof, and also to confirm their injoyment of all that Good, and all those Priviledges and Benefits affirmed to accrue to them. But I shall not stay upon it: I conceive both are sufficiently done already. Let me rather excite all Men to admire the Goodness and Wisdom of God in doing so much for the Seed of his People, and yet providing for the free exercise of his own Sovereignty over and among them, as well as others, and his Justice in condemning none, but such as wilfully sin away their own Mercies.

*Obj.* I. It will be said, 'Tis true the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, visibly appear to us, and may be hoped according to a judgment of Charity, to have all that Good, and all those Benefits and Privileges afore assigned to them, as they are the Seed of such Parents, conferred upon and ensured to them by the Covenant, as confirmed by the Application of the Token thereof to them : but that they have all that Good, and all those Benefits and Privileges really and truly actually granted to, and conferred upon them in their pure Infant-state, is more than we can affirm ; inasmuch as secret things belong to God, but things revealed to us and our Children.

*Answ.* I confess, most that have pleaded for Infant-Baptism upon this ground, viz. their Interest in the Covenant, do too commonly express themselves to this purpose ; but it seems past all rational doubt, and is so to me, that what they visibly appear to have by virtue of their Interest in the Covenant, that they have in reality and truth. Hence as they do not so much as visibly appear to have a real work of Grace upon their hearts, there being no Promise securing that to them ; so for all the Good and all the Benefits and Blessings afore assigned to them, they have them in reality and truth. This is evident from a double Consideration ;

1. First, That they are the Seed of true Believers, such as have truly and really performed the conditions of the Covenant of Grace, and consequently are really and internally in Covenant themselves.

2. That the Seed of Believers Interest in the Covenant, and having all that Good, and all those Benefits granted and conferred upon them thereby, depends not at all upon any qualifications in, or any

act or duty performed by them themselves, but flows merely from the Promises of the Covenant appertaining to them as the Seed of such Parents. Hence in case they only visibly appear to us to have all that Good, and all those Privileges before mentioned granted to, and conferred upon them, it must be either, because the Promises only visibly appear to us to appertain to them ; or that all that Good, and all those Blessings only seem, or visibly appear to us to be containd in, granted and conferred by those Promises ; or lastly, because the Promises of God do but seem or visibly appear to us to be true and faithful, but seem, or visibly appear to us to grant to, or confer upon those that are truly and really interested in them, that Good that is really contained in and intended by them. None of which things can be granted. Not the first, for I have before proved that the Promises do appertain to all the Seed of Believers, (I mean it still of true Believers, as *Abraham* was ) and that definitely to each one, or to every one of them in particular. Not the second, for undoubtedly God intends that very Good the Promises mention. Not the third, for the Promises are true and faithful, they do really and truly convey or confer an actual right to the Good contained in them to those, to whom they do really and truly appertain. And from hence it will unavoidably follow, that there is no place for a judgment of Charity to be exercised immediately and directly towards Infants. It's true, where we can only exercise a judgment of Charity towards Parents, there we can only exercise the same judgment of Charity towards their Children ; but where Parents are known to be true Believers, (as in the instance of *Abraham*) there a judgment of Charity hath nothing

thing to do with reference to their Seed. And we speak of the case of the Seed of Believers according to what their Parents are in deed and in truth, or are known to God to be. A judgment of Charity can only be acted towards Men with reference to, or in regard of their having performed the condition of the Promises, and consequently to their right to those Promises: But in the case of the Infants I speak of both these are certain. Hence undeniably what they visibly appear to have, they have in reality and truth.

*Obj. 2.* It may be objected, That to grant the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, all those Benefits and Priviledges afore assigned to them in truth and reality, will greatly weaken, if not utterly overthrow the Doctrine of Saint's Perseverance: For we must then grant that some, who had a true and real Union with Christ, are discharged from the guilt and condemning power of sin; have a true and proper Interest in God as their God; and a present right to Salvation, may yet fall away and finally perish: For so it is certain some of the Seed of Believers do. Now if Union with Christ, a Covenant-state with God, a discharge from the guilt of sin, Propriety in God, and right to future Salvation, will secure none from Apostacy and finally perishing, what assurance can any have that they shall not fall away and finally perish? And thus while we endeavour to promote the joy and comfort of Saints one way, we shall destroy it another: while we endeavour to promote their joy and comfort, by establishing their Childrens Interest in the Covenant of Grace, and assigning them so much Good, and so many Priviledges as interested therein, we shall destroy their joy and comfort by weakning the grounds of assurance, that them-

selves have had of their own continuance in their Covenant-state Godwards ; while we endeavour to establish their Childrens Covenant-state, we shall leave them destitute of any sure ground that themselves shall be continued in theirs.

*Answ.* What Union the Infant-seed of Believers, as such have with Christ ; what sins they are discharged from the guilt and condemning power of ; from whence their discharge from the guilt and condemning power of sin doth arise and accrue to them ; how far, and upon what terms the Promises giving them an Interest and Propriety in God lays an obligation upon him to communicate himself to, or act for their Good ; as also what right they have to future Salvation, with the terms upon which they alone can actually injoy it ( supposing their growth up to years of Maturity ) are, hath been already declared, and must be carefully remembred : which being remembred and well weighed, I see no just reason, why the assignment of any or all those Benefits and Priviledges, as afore explained and limited to them, should be lookt upon as of the tendency mentioned. This I doubt not to affirm, though we grant all that hath been assigned to the Infant-seed of Believers, and that universally, and merely as such ; yet the Doctrine of Saints Perseverance may be founded upon such sure bases, and maintained by such Scripture demonstrations, as that it shall stand firm, maugre the utmost opposition that can be made against it ; so that nothing, but their own deficiency in point of Faith, and assurance that themselves are such, and the due improvement of that assurance, can justly deprive any true Believer of the highest Plerophorie, that the Scriptures give an incouragement to endeavour after.

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To attempt the fixing of that Doctrine upon its true basis, or improving and managing the various Arguments by which it may be established, would be extracentrical to my present undertaking: yet let me say only thus much, that the assurance the Scripture gives us,

1. That there is an Election of Grace, not only of Persons so and so qualified, but of individual Persons to be so and so qualified.

2. That all appertaining thereunto are given of the Father unto Christ, with an explicite expression of his will to him, that he should lose none of them, but should raise them up at the last day, *viz.* to the life of Glory.

3. That the Covenant of Grace is immutable, when once that, *viz.* the Spirit, which renders it so, is actually given.

4. That the spiritual life of all Believers is laid up, and hidden with Christ in God, and that both in respect of the principle, and conserving cause of it; and hence,

5. That there is an unseparable connexion between effectual Vocation and Glorification; I say, the assurance that the Scriptures give us of these things, with several others of the like importance, secures that Doctrine, to the joy and comfort, yea and that unspeakable and full of Glory, of all Saints, though all the Benefits and Priviledges afore declared are granted to all the Infant-seed of Believers, among whom yet many finally fall away and perish: So that I conceive, that as what hath been granted to the Infant-seed of Believers, may greatly promote their Parents joy and comfort in them; so the granting of it hath no just tendency to allay their joy and comfort. The assurance

rance of their own standing in their Covenant-state Godward hath an aptitude to yeeld their Children may have all that Good, and yet their own assurance of Perseverance in Grace, and infallibly coming to Glory, be no way weakned or prejudiced thereby.

*Obj. 3.* Possibly some may further say, To affirm that all the Seed of believing Parents have so much Good, and so many Benefits and Priviledges by their Interest in the Covenant, and the Application of the Token of it unto them, seems inconsistent with the Doctrine of Election : for among other things it has been affirmed, that they have all universally, without any respect to Election or Preterition, a present right to Salvation, and that ratified, sealed and confirmed by the Token of the Covenant ; and consequently that in case of their death in their pure Infant-state, they are infallibly saved. Which if so, we must either grant that some, that appertain not to the Election of Grace, are saved, which overthrows that Doctrine ; or else affirm that all that die in their Infancy are elected : which as it is improbable in it self ; so cannot be proved from Scripture.

*Answ.* That all the Infant-seed of true Believers dying in their pure Infant-state are infallibly saved, is past all rational doubt to me : and as for the Doctrine of Election, I apprehend not any solid reason, why it should seem at all inconsistent with it, seeing it is very rational to suppose, that all such Infants dying in that state do indeed appertain to the Election of Grace. As for what is objected concerning the improbability of that, and the want of Scripture to prove it, I conceive the quite contrary may be easily made to appear, viz. that it is not only highly probable in it self, but hath countenance from Scripture.

i. That it is not at all improbable, but rather highly probable, appears two ways.

i. From the confessed dealings of God with the Adult; that no Adult person can be saved without Regeneration, Faith and Repentance, is positively affirmed by our Lord Christ, *John 3. 3. Luke 13. 3.* with *Mark 16. 16.* Hence it must necessarily follow, and is granted by all that own the Doctrine of Election, that God does so order his Providence towards Men, that none among the Adult that appertain to the Election of Grace do die before a work of Regeneration be wrought in them, which is and must be done according to the ordinary way of God's working upon Man by the Word, as some way communicated to them: and how often is it found that Men and Women, whose lot is cast in places wholly remote from all ordinary means of Conversion, are yet possibly after many years, either brought to the means of Grace, or they carried to them, whereby they are savingly wrought upon, and thereby declared to have appertained to the Election of Grace? Now if so be the Providence of God for so long a time watcheth over such Men, whereby they are preserved from death: why should it seem at all improbable? But on the other hand it is highly probable, that God should order his Providence after the like manner towards Infants, and answerably continue life to the Non-elect, that so their falling short of the Good promised should be chargeable upon themselves; and take away by death only the Elect, whose Salvation is secured by the Promise made to them, as the Seed of such Parents: hereby the Salvation of the Elect is secured, and the Grace of God therein greatly magnified; when the Non-elect apostatizing from God,

his Justice in their condemnation will shine forth in greater brightness and Glory. So that for God so to order his Providence towards the Seed of Believers is so far from any improbability, that it is greatly probable.

2. This will further appear, if we consider on the one hand, the infinite Goodness as well as Faithfulness of God, in conjunction with the Covenant and Promises entered with, and made to the Seed of Believers: and on the other hand, how many of those of their Seed that live to years of Maturity do apostatize, grow wicked, and consequently never enjoy the Good covenanted and promised to them. It is not unusually, though very much without ground pleaded by our Opposers, as a reason why they cannot embrace the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism, that they can see little difference between the Children of Believers, and the Children of Unbelievers; the Children of the one prove wicked, as well as the Children of the other. Now though this be groundless, and proceeds in a great measure from mere prejudice, an evident difference being ordinarily to be seen: yet it must be confess'd it may be very rationally expected, that in case God has, as we affirm he has, extended his Covenant and Promises universally to the Seed of his People, more should enjoy the Good of them, than can be rationally hoped do, in respect of, or among those that live to years of Maturity; though according to the true tenour of the Covenant, the Good of it is not infallibly secured to all, no nor to any that grow up to years of Maturity; and consequently the Apostacy of some, no way reflects upon the Faithfulness of God; yet when he has extended his Covenant and Promises to them, considering how Good, and ready to do Good he is, it may not with-

out the appearance of reason seem strange, that no more enjoy that Good, than may be supposed to do, of those that live to years of Maturity. Hence it is highly probable, that all that die in their Infancy, or such as do indeed appertain to the Election of Grace, and answerably do enjoy the full Good of the Covenant: and if we take in all that die in their Infancy, with those that growing up to years of Maturity do give assurance of their personal taking hold of the Covenant, not only the Faithfulness but the Goodness of God in extending and making good his Covenant to the Seed of his People, will shine forth in their glory and lustre. And how great a Good is it for the Seed of Believers to be taken into the same Covenant with their Parents will abundantly appear. The day of Judgment will, I doubt not, fully vindicate the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism from those unjust reproaches 'tis now by Men, yea by some good Men, in their darkness loaded with. But,

2. As this, *viz.* that only such among the Seed of Believers, as appertain to the Election of Grace, are taken away by death in their pure Infant-state, and consequently that all that are not elected do live to years of Maturity, wants not countenance from Scripture: for let it be observed, that we read in Scripture only of two of the Seed of true Believers, whose preterition was intimated or made known by special Revelation from God; and both these expressly recorded to have lived to years of Maturity, and to have forfeited their Interest in the Promises, by their own sin and Apostacy, these were *Ishmael* and *Esaū*; the one forfeits his Interest by persecuting his Brother, the other by a prophane selling his Birth-right. That the Preterition, or Non-election of

both these are signified by immediate Revelation from God, the Apostle shews Rom. 9. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. That both lived to years of Maturity, and forfeited their Interest the ways forementioned, is expressly declared, Gen. 21. 9. compared with Gal. 4. 29. Gen. 25. 29, 30, &c. with Heb. 12. 16. And it is very rational to suppose, that as it was with these two, the leading Instances and Paterns of God's dealings with the Non-elect-Seed of his People: So it is answerably with all that are not elected. And as we read only of these two, whose Preterition or Non-election were signified by special Revelation; and we see both of them live to years of Maturity, and forfeit their Interest in the Promises, by their own sin and Apostacy: So the Scripture particularly mentions the death only of one of the Seed of true Believers in their pure Infant-state, and gives sufficient ground to believe that that did appertain to the Election of Grace: This was David's child by Bathsheba: that that child did belong to the Election of Grace, David questions not, but takes it for granted, as appears by his comforting himself upon its death, and professing his Faith, that he should go to it, and not it return to him.

Obj. 4. Possibly some will say, What hath been pleaded for on the behalf of the Infant-seed of Believers, is nothing but what is common to all Infants universally; in as much as all Mankind universally, as born into the World, are by Christ freed from the condemning power of Original sin, restored to the Love and Favour of God, and put into a state of Life and Salvation. And consequently if any Infants ought to have the Token of the Covenant applyed to them, then all ought alike to have it applyed unto them:

them: and on the other hand, if all ought not, then none ought to have it applyed unto them: Or suppose it should be granted, that some ought to have it applyed, yet their states and conditions would be no way bettered thereby, seeing what Good they are supposed to receive by it, is common to all.

*Answ.* I suppose this Objection will not be owned by many, but to those few that may, I would reply, by only asking this one Question; viz. How all Mankind come by all that Good? have they it by the Covenant of Grace? or by any other Covenant or Promise distinguished from and independent upon the Covenant of Grace? or have they it by a mere resultancy from Christ, undertaking and performing his Mediatory Office?

1. I say, have they it by the Covenant of Grace? save that cannot be; for the Covenant of Grace is only actually established between God and *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations. Behold, saith God, *I establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their generations.* Now if so be the Covenant of Grace had been afore established with all Mankind, here had been no new Priviledge, or no Priviledge beyond what was common to Man in general, granted unto *Abraham*, or to any of his Seed. The establishment of the Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, as contradistinguished from the rest of Mankind, evidently proves 'tis not established with all Mankind; for then the establishing of it with him and his Seed had been a mere superfluous and insignificant thing, seeing it had been afore established with him and his Seed as of the number of Mankind, and that in the same sense, and with the like advantage both to him and them as

now it is. How far the Covenant is conditionally made, or rather offered to all Men concerns not our present purpose; seeing as so made or offered, it actually conveys not the Good promised to any, untill themselves have performed the conditions of it: But that it is actually made, or entred with all Mankind as such, is not only destitute of any proof from Scripture, but is directly contrary to the whole tenour of Scriptures. The Gentiles are said to be *strangers to the Covenants of Promise* antecedent to their Faith in Christ, and thereby becoming *Abrahams Seed*. The Promises are said to be made to *Christ*, and consequently appertain to Men only as in him. Hence *taking hold of the Covenant* is made necessary to a right to the Promises. But to insist upon this may well be accounted superfluous, as being a denial of what no body hath affirmed. Now then, if so be the Covenant of Grace, ( wherein all the Good aforementioned is contained ) be not actually entred and established with all Mankind as such, then neither all, nor any part of that Good can be come upon all Men, merely as such by the Covenant of Grace.

2. Have they it by vertue of any other Covenant or Promise contradistinct from, or independent upon the Covenant of Grace? That cannot be, because no such Covenant or Promise is to be found throughout the whole Scriptures. Let any such Covenant or Promise be shewed, and it shall be attended to. The only Scripture ( so far as I can call to mind ) that gives the least countenance to this supposal, is Rom. 5. 15, 16, 17, 18. But to that I shall only say two things. First, That the Apostle's bare using of the univerſal Particle *all*, is too weak a ground to lay such an Assertion upon, especially when no Covenant or

or Promise can be found, by, or according to which the gift there spoken of is conferred upon all Men; And seeing it is evident that that term is sometimes used, when yet it is to be interpreted and understood in a limited sense, I need not cite places to those that are at all acquainted with the Scriptures. Secondly, I answer, that the Apostle's design is not to shew that the free Gift by Christ is of equal extent in the Donation of it with the condemnation arising from *Adam's* sin: but his design is to compare *Adam's* sin, and the purchase made by Christ, in regard of their respective efficacies, or in point of their respective causalities, or power to produce their different effects. In brief his design is only to shew, that seeing the offence of one Man, *viz.* *Adam's*, was effective of the condemnation of all his Posterity; then the Grace of God and the Righteousness of Christ, (who is not merely Man, but God-Man) must needs be more effectual for their Justification and Life, who have an Interest in, and Union with him. That this is the Apostle's design, appears two ways.

First, From his assignment of a preheminence or superabundance to the Grace of God and this free Gift by Christ, above what is predictable of the Offence of *Adam*; which must needs respect the power and efficacy of the Grace of God and the free Gift by Christ to justify and save; and of the Offence of *Adam* to condemn: for if so be we consider the Persons upon whom condemnation is come by *Adam's* Offence, and the persons upon whom the free Gift is come unto Justification of Life, no such assignment of a preheminence and superabundance to the Grace of God and the free Gift by Christ could be made, inasmuch as that condemnation is come upon all by *Adam's* Offence, and the

free Gift can come but upon all. And where the Objects and Persons concerned are of equal extent, no preheminency can be assigned with respect unto them.

Secondly, This appears from the Apostle's variation of his phrase from *many* to *all*, and again from *all* to *many*, which plainly shews he had not so much respect to the Persons upon whom either Condemnation or the free Gift is come, as either to the things come upon them, or to the causes and means, from whence, or whereby those things are come upon them respectively.

Thirdly, I answer, Though the Apostle tells us the free Gift is come upon all to justification of Life; yet he tells us not how, or in what sense, or upon what terms it is come: He may only mean it is come upon all in respect of the conditional offer and tender of it: So we may understand that of the Apostle, *Tit. 2. 11. The Grace of God hath appeared, bringing Salvation to all Men*, for so the Greek exactly runs. The Grace of God hath brought Salvation to all Men in regard of the offer and tender of it, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*. See the like passage, *Rom. 3. 22. The Righteousness of God is revealed to all*: So here the free Gift is come upon all, that is in respect of the offer and tender of it. For the Apostle may suppose the condition already performed, and only intend its being come upon all them that believe, according to that of the Apostle before mentioned, *The Righteousness of God is manifest unto all, and upon all that believe, and there is no difference*: So here the free Gift is come upon all to justification of Life, viz. upon all that believe, and there is no difference. From the whole we may evidently see, this Scripture will not prove what is affirmed, viz. That all Mankind,

kind, and that universally as born into the World, are freed from the condemnation of the Law, and restored to a state of Favour and Life by Christ: So that as the Covenant of Grace is not entred with all Mankind in general; so there is no other Covenant or Promise recorded, or mentioned in the Scriptures, by vertue of which any one, much less all Mankind, can have the Good assigned to the Infant-seed of Believers granted to, or settled upon them.

Thirdly, Have they it by a mere resultancy from Christ's undertaking and performing the work of Mediation? Sure the grossness of such a supposition renders any reply to it superfluous. It would be a mere loss of time to suppose that which is of it self too absurd to be affirmed by any. To put then a period to this, If the Covenant of Grace be not actually entred with all Mankind, and that as such; If there be no other Covenant or Promise to be found in Scripture, by vertue of which any uninterested in the Covenant of Grace can lay claim to that Good and those Benefits and Priviledges granted to, and settled upon the Seed of Believers, as Confederates with their Parents; If that Good, and those Benefits come not upon any by a mere resultancy from the Death and Sufferings of Christ, without the intervening of some Covenant or Promise; then there is no ground to affirm, that the Seed of Believers have as under the Covenant signed and sealed by the Sign and Token of it, nothing but what is common to Mankind in general. Only let me add, what will be the case of all Infants born of Unbelieving Parents, and dying in their Infancy, and how God will deal with them in respect of their eternal states, I shall not determine. This is all that I affirm, that as to what God hath re-

vealed in his Word, the Good, Benefits and Privileges assigned to the Infant-seed of Believers are peculiar and proper unto them, and not common to all Infants in general, they only having an actual Interest in the Covenant of Grace; and consequently as they alone have a right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant, so an unspeakable advantage by that their Covenant-interest, and the Application of the Token thereof unto them, above what all other Infants, as to what the Scripture reveals, have. But let that suffice for the second Benefit or Advantage accruing to the Infant-seed of Believers by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them upon a precedent Interest they have in the Covenant it self.

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## C H A P. IX.

*The third Benefit accruing to the Seed of Believers by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, proposed. A threefold subserviency thereof to their embracement of the Covenant, as they grow up to years of Maturity, shewed. First, Such Pre-ingagements as would obstruct that their embracement of the Covenant are obviated and prevented. What Pre-ingagements Children are subject to. The spring of them discovered. How obviated by the Application of the Token, declared. Secondly, Their embracement of the Covenant by the Application of*

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the Token subserved by way of Obligation. The several Obligations that the Seed of Believers are under, as bearing the Token of the Covenant, to imbrace the Covenant, opened. Thirdly, The same end subserved by the Application of the Token of the Covenant by way of Encouragement. What Encouragements the Seed of Believers have to imbrace the Covenant, shewed.

### 3. The third and last Benefit or Advantage, that.

**T**I shall take notice of, that the Seed of Believers have by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them, as antecedently interested in the Covenant it self, is the subservency thereof to their personal embracement of the Covenant, and injoyment of all the Good of it, as they grow up to years of Maturity. And here I shall only take notice of a three-fold subservency, that the Application of the Token of the Covenant to Infants. ( supposing them duly instructed in the end and uses of it ) hath to their taking hold of the Covenant, and giving up themselves to God according to the tenour of it as they grow up to years of Maturity.

I. It hath a potent tendency to obviate and prevent all such Pre-ingagements as would be obstructive and prejudicial to their embracement of the Covenant. And here we may observe, that they are liable to be pre-ingaged three ways.

First, In ways of Idolatry. Secondly, In a pursuance of the good things of the World. Thirdly, In ways of moral Impieties and Debauchries. Now

to be pre-ingaged, especially fixed in any of these ways, must needs be greatly obstructive and prejudicial to their embracement of the Covenant that God hath established between himself and his People. What ways and courses Men ingage, at least are fixed in from their Child-hood, they are not easily brought to relinquish: *Hath a Nation changed their God?* Jer.

**2. 11.** That God in whose worship and service Men have been ingaged from their youth, they will not easily change: So to be ingaged and accustomed to atheistical, irreligious and profane ways and courses from their youth, is not a little obstructive and prejudicial to their embracement of the Covenant: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

**Jer. 13. 23.** And the like is true of Childrens being early ingaged in the pursuance of the World, and the things thereof. To shew the various ways, how to be pre-ingaged in any of these ways from a Man's Child-hood, obstructs and opposeth his embracement of the Covenant and giving up himself to God in Christ in a Covenant-way, is a matter of no great difficulty, but would be somewhat excentrical to my present purpose: But this I say, how obstructive and prejudicial soever such an engagement, especially fixing in any of these ways from Mens Child-hood, would be to their embracement of the Covenant; (and ingage they will in one or the other of them, and that early too, unless the free Grace of God blessing the means subserving their taking hold of the Covenant prevent) yet the Application of the Token of the Covenant to Infants hath a potent tendency to prevent any such pre-engagements they are liable to: For let us but take a brief view of the original springs or causes whence

Mens so early ingaging in one or another of the ways and courses mentioned doth proceed.

1. It proceeds from certain natural and imbred notions of a Deity engraven upon the minds of all Men; at least from a natural disposedness of the faculties of the rational Soul to comply with that notion when suggested from without.

2. From a sense and feeling of self-emptiness and insufficiency as to that Happiness and Blessedness they soon perceive themselves capable of.

3. From the inapprehensiveness and insensibleness of any cogent obligation to the contrary. Man from his very Childhood is prone to look upon and exalt himself as God, to say of his whole self, as those in the Psalm of their tongues, *I am mine own, who is Lord over me?* And according to various circumstances that Children fall under, so from this threefold spring they ingage in one or another of the ways mentioned. But now the bringing them under the bond of the Covenant, and ingaging them to the true God in Christ by the Application of the Token to them, hath a potent tendency to obviate and prevent their ingaging or fixing in any of these ways. Let us see it in some Instances.

1. The true God is first presented to their minds. Now it's usual for Man, as through the fall become not only dark, but darkness it self, and consequently as having lost the knowledge of the true God, to comply and fall in with, and chuse that God to himself, whether it be true, or any false God that is first presented to his mind, or that is first proposed to him under the notion of a Deity. Hence it is, that the same God is embraced and worshipped as their God by several Nations successively from one Generation to another: *Hath a Nation changed their God?* It is not often

found that they have. Children usually fall in with and worship that God their Parents have done, and from hence it is, that the true God is owned and worshipped successively from one Generation to another in Nations and Places where the Scriptures are received, and the Christian Doctrine imbraced. They own and worship him, not as being convinced that he is indeed the true God by rational demonstrations, much less as being savingly taught and enlightened by himself; but he is that God that is first presented to their minds, and that they first apprehend under the notion of a Deity: and this, though it is true, through the subtlety of Satan, and corruption in the hearts of Men, too often is utterly useless to them in order to their eternal Happiness; yet in itself hath a singular subserviency thereunto, and would be of no small advantage to Men, were it well improved. Yet further, the true God is not only first presented to the minds of the Seed of Believers, but he is presented to their minds as standing in a Covenant-relation towards them, and consequently they find themselves in a Covenant-relation with him (for Covenant-relations are always mutual.) Hence as they find him obliged by Covenant to be theirs: so themselves obliged to be his; which must needs have a potent tendency, as to check any Inquiries that they would otherwise be prone to make after, so to keep them from attending to any proposals that might be made by others of any false god, and also from the choice of any false god by themselves. To have the true God first presented to the mind is of no small advantage to prevent Mens inquiring after, and attending to the proposal of any false god to them; especially considering the suitableness of those discov-

ries God hath made of himself in his Word (and as revealed therein he is supposed to be presented to their minds) to those notions of a God in the general, that are either found engraven upon the minds of Men as born into the World, or are taken up by the free use of the rational powers and faculties of the Soul. Now for Children so soon as capable of reflecting upon themselves, and acting rationally with referente to their own future welfare and welbeing, to find an antecedent mutual relation between this God and themselves, wherein he stands related to them as their God, and they stand related to him as his People, Subjects and Servants, will add greatly to the more effectual prevention of their ingaging in any ways of Idolatry they (as Youth is) are prone to comply and fall in with that God that is first presented to the mind, or that the mind hath the first notice of: so the notion under which the true God is presented to their minds suiting so well with those antecedent notions they have of a God in the general, will greatly conduce to their compliance and falling in with him and his worship and service: But when they find a mutual relation already established between him and them, that will yet further their compliance; and consequently their inquiries after, or attendance to what may be proposed or offered to them concerning any other God, will be obviated and prevented. And though this may seem of small importance to Children born in Places and Nations where the true God is only owned worshipped and served, there being no danger of their first ingaging in any ways of Idolatry in such Places and Nations: yet we must remember, that God in the establishment of his Covenant had respect to his People and their Seed; not only as inhabiting

biting such Places and Nations, but as inhabiting Places and Nations where false gods are owned, worshipped and served. 2. God's being under an obligation to communicate himself to, and act for their good according to the tenour of the Covenant, will give them assurance of a fulness of Blessedness and Happiness in their alone cleaving to, worshipping and serving him ; whence they may be easily convinced of the un-necessariness of either applying themselves to the worship of any false god, or to the World, or any ways of sensuality for the gaining that Happiness they find themselves capable of, but insufficient unto as of themselves. — Man, so soon as capable of reflecting upon himself, or taking any account of his own case and condition, finds himself utterly destitute of a self-sufficiency, sees himself capable of more good than he is furnished with, and subject to variety of evils, which of himself without some extrinsical aid he cannot secure himself from, nor deliver himself out of : hence he is forced to look without, and cast about him to find out which way, or from whence he may be supplyed with that good he finds himself defective in, and delivered out of, or secured from that evil he finds himself under or subject to : and according to various circumstances that Men are under, so they betake themselves to, and ingage in various ways and courses, yet with reference to the same general end, viz. the gaining of Happiness and Blessedness. Now Children, if left to the mere conduct of nature as now corrupted, will certainly and unavoidably betake themselves to one or other of the aforementioned ways, which must needs be greatly obstructive and prejudicial to their embracement of the Covenant of Grace. But now for the Seed of Believers to find God under such a precedent

cedent obligation to communicate himself to, and act for their good, as he hath put himself under towards them, must needs have a powerful tendency to obviate and prevent their ingaging in any such way; because they will find their Happiness & Blessedness fully secured by that obligation, supposing them not to reject, but actually to own the Covenant established with them.

3. The Covenant under the bond of which they already are, strongly obligeth them against applying themselves to, or ingaging in any of the ways mentioned; But of this more hereafter. So that we may see how great a tendency the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of Believers, upon a precedent Interest they have in the Covenant it self, hath to the obviating and preventing their ingaging or fixing in any ways obstructive and prejudicial to their embracing of the Covenant as they grow up to years of Maturity; those ways they are naturally prone to ingage in (their engagement in which would oppose their embracing of the Covenant) are hedged up. When God hedgeth up the way of his People after their Lovers, then they resolve upon returning to and seeking him, *Hos.2.6,7.* So for Children to have their ingaging in any destructive ways obviated and prevented, highly conduceth to their taking hold of the Covenant, and applying themselves to the worship and service of God.

II. The Covenant-relation, wherein the Seed of Believers stands Godwards, as solemnized, ratified and confirmed by the Application of the Token, subserves their personal embracement, and taking hold of the Covenant, and answerably giving up themselves to God in Christ according to the tenour of it by way of obligation: they hereby become under the strongest obligation

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obligation to do it ; and we may observe a fourfold  
obligation that they are under, beyond what the  
Children of others are.

1. First, There is all that Love, Grace and Goodness of God express in the extending the Covenant with the Sign and Token thereof unto them, and granting them all the Good aforementioned, as an obligation upon them. As this Grace, Love, and Goodness of God is a powerful ingagement to Parents to endeavour the conversion of their Children, and bring them to a personal embracement of the Covenant ; so it is alike powerful ingagement to Children themselves to imbrace it, and give up themselves to the worship and service of God according to the tenour of it. How great Grace, Love and Goodness God hath express to the Seed of Believers in his extending his Covenant unto them with the Token thereof, hath been already declared. Now when they become capable of understanding, and reflecting upon that Love, Grace and Goodness, the apprehension and consideration of it hath a potent tendency to excite their love to, and ingage them to take this God for their God, and to worship and serve him. Love hath a constraining power, and Children are capable of receiving early impressions from their apprehensions of what Grace and Love is express towards them as well as grown persons.

2. There is their Parents acceptation of the Covenant for them, and their entring them into it, and giving them up to God according to the tenour of it, as another obligation upon them. Parents acts on the behalf of, or with reference to their Children, are an obligation upon them to comply with, and stand to what is done by their Parents on their behalf, and with

reference

reference to them. Hence *Samuel* complyes with *Hannah's* vow, and gives himself freely to serve the Lord in his Tabernacle, according to the dedication she had made of him. Yea *Jephthah's* daughter complies with her Father's vow, though (as most think) it was to be offered up in Sacrifice: *My Father ( saith she ) if thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth.* Judg. 11. 36. As Parents have a power to dispose of their Children in a subordination unto God : so Children are obliged to comply with that disposal they make of them. And as the confidence Nature it self teacheth them to have in their Parents as to their prudence, love, &c. so their duty towards them obligeth them so to do. Hence their Parents having accepted of the Covenant for them, and answerably entred them into it, they are under a powerful obligation to comply with what their Parents have done, and answerably personally imbrace the Covenant, and give up themselves to God in Christ to worship and serve him.

3. There is the Token of the Covenant as applyed to, and born by them, as a further obligation upon them. One use and end of the Token of the Covenant, whether Circumcision or Baptism, according to divine Institution, was, and is to oblige and ingage the Persons to whom it was and is applied to cleave and adhere to God in Christ, his worship and service. The Token of the Covenant is equivalent to Presimony given to Souldiers : God by it obligeth his People to himself, and to serve under Christ the Captain of their Salvation : From this use or end of the Token or Seals of the Covenant, they seem to have received their denomination of Sacraments ; which word is conceived to be borrowed from the ancient

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Romans, among whom it was used to signify the oath  
by which, together with certain rights and a pre-  
script form of words, Souldiers did ingage themselves,  
or were ingaged to do whatsoever the Emperour or  
General should command, and not forsake their  
Colours till the Wars were ended. Tertullian is  
supposed to be the first that brought the word into  
the Church, and applied it to a spiritual use. But  
however the Word is not improper nor unfit, it fully  
expressing this end and use of the Tokens of the Coven-  
ant, they were, and are for the ingaging men to  
God in Christ. God by them ingageth and ties his  
People to himself. Now the Seed of Believers when  
they come to years of Maturity finding themselves un-  
der this bond, and that as put upon them by Divine  
Institution, must needs be more strongly obliged to  
take God in Christ as their God, and give up them-  
selves to him, to be his, to worship and serve him  
according to the tenour of the Covenant. God's ha-  
ving pressed them ( as I may so speak ) into his own  
service, and obliged them to himself by such a solemn  
right, is a strong obligation upon them to serve him,  
and give themselves to him. Hence we read of the  
Martyr, who to all his temptations to deny Christ  
makes no reply but this, *Baptizatus sum.*

4. There is the great aggravation that their sin in  
rejecting the Covenant they had, as the Seed of such  
Parents, admission into, and forsaking God and his  
ways, above what the sin of others in neglecting to  
take hold of the Covenant doth admit of; and con-  
sequently the greatness of their condemnation above  
the condemnation of others in case they should so do,  
as a further obligation upon them to imbrace the Co-  
venant, and walk in the ways of God they are afore-  
obliged

obliged to. Their sin in rejecting the Covenant into which they were taken admits of variety of aggravations; beyond what the sin of others in not taking hold of the Covenant admits of, which they being made sensible and apprehensive of, hath a potent tendency strongly to oblige them to imbrace it. But of this I may touch more again hereafter. But

3. And lastly, The interest that the Seed of Believers have in the Covenant as ratified, sealed and confirmed to them by the Application of the Token, highly subserves their personal embracement of it by way of encouragement; they have peculiar encouragements thereunto beyond what others have. To instance in some few of them.

1. First, They find themselves already in a state of peace with God. Their work is not so much to gain, or make peace with God, as to maintain it. Their peace is already made by being received into the Covenant of Grace, the Law hath nothing to charge upon them to their condemnation, they are not under the Law but under Grace; they are discharged from the condemning power of whatever guilt might hitherto be charged upon them. And how great an encouragement must that needs be to them to close in with Christ? what ground of hope have they that God will accept of them and grant them his Spirit for their Renovation and Sanctification? 'Tis none of the least discouragements to Adult sinners to come unto Christ, that they ly under so much guilt as they are conscious to themselves of: were they assured their guilt were removed, that God were not obliged to deal with them as enemies, what encouragements and what hopes would they have, that God might give them his Spirit for their Regeneration

tion and Sanctification. Now that discouragement is removed out of the way of the Seed of Believers, finding themselves already in a state of peace with God ; how can they then rationally entertain any jealousies about his readiness to do them good, and continue them in that state ?

2. There is the mutual Love and Friendship that hath been between God and their Parents as a further encouragement to them. The special Love and Favour that God bears to their Parents, is a choise encouragement to Children, that, accepting of the Covenant, and giving up themselves to God in Christ according to the tenour of it, they shall not be rejected, but readily accepted by him. As God hath granted and actually vouchsafed many choice Mercies and Favours to Children for their Parents sake : so Children have improved the consideration of their relation to such Parents as a help to their Faith and Hope in their seeking unto God for Mercy. Thus, though Ishmael by his persecuting of Isaac had forfeited his interest in the Covenant, and was cast out both of Abraham's Family and the Covenant ; yet God promised to make him a Nation, because he was Abraham's Seed, Gen. 21. 13. So we find God for the sake both of Abraham and David shewing Mercy to their respective Posterity, though guilty of great provocations against him , Psalm. 105. 42. Isa. 37. 35. Hence are such Petitions in Scripture, *Ob turn unto me, and have Mercy upon me, give thy strength to thy Servant, and save the Son of thy Hand-maid,* Psal. 86. 16. As the consideration of his own relation to God as his Servant, so the consideration of his descent from her that was his Hand-maid, was a great encouragement to him, and a great advantage to his Faith and

and Hope in petitioning for Mercy. For Children to consider their relation to such Parents, between God and whom there hath been or is a mutual special Love and Friendship, is a singular encouragement to them in taking hold of the Covenant, and applying themselves to God for the Mercies and Blessings of it. The Love that God bears to believing Parents is a very great engagement to him to a ready doing Good to their Children.

3. There is all that God hath already done for them as the Seed of such Parents signally expressive and significative of his special good-will towards them, as a further encouragement to them God's extending his Covenant to them, and thereby freeing them from the condemning power of Original sin, giving them an interest in himself, and a right to future Salvation, and thereby securing their Salvation in case of their death in Infancy, are glorious significations of his special good will unto them, and willingness that they in particular should be saved, and consequently may be improved as choice encouragements to them to take hold of the Covenant: They have not the least ground to suspect God's readiness to receive them, and proceed on in his goodness and kindness to them, seeing he hath secured their Salvation by his Covenant and Promise, while they were uncapable of performing the conditions of it in their own Persons, be sure he will not reject them, or refuse to continue his Grace to them, in order to their future Salvation, when they are willing to accept of and perform the conditions of the Covenant themselves. *Paul strengtheneth his Faith and Hope as to God's delivering him from every evil work, and preserving him to his Heavenly Kingdom by the confidence*

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ration of what he had done for him in delivering him from that great Tyrant *Nero*, 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17, 18. And surely much more may the Seed of Believers encourage themselves and strengthen their Faith and Hope as to God's acceptation of them, and giving them Grace and Glory, themselves being now willing to accept of and perform the conditions of the Covenant by the consideration of what he hath already done for them.

4. They may, if not positively assure themselves, yet comfortably hope that they are yet actually under the Promises of God's being a God to them, and giving them future Salvation; And how great an encouragement must that needs be to them? They have the faithfulness of God ingaged to make good his Promises, unless they by their wilful rejection of Christ and the Terms of the Covenant forfeit their own Interest in them.

*Obj.* But it may be said, Though hitherto they have been actually under the Promises, and consequently might have encouraged themselves by the consideration of the faithfulness of God: but now they can no longer lay claim to the Promises, but upon supposition of their own performance of the conditions of the Covenant.

*Answ.* It is true, but yet let this be considered, That God in the Promise speaks more determinately, expressly and particularly to them, than he doth to others. The language of God to each one of them is this, I am thy God, only do not now reject my Covenant, and the relation between me and thee shall be continued. To others he speaks more generally and indefinitely, *He that believes shall be saved. Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.*

*Whosoever will, let him come and take of the Water of Life.* Now, though it is true, these general and indefinite Promises and Invitations are sufficient encouragements to all to come unto and close in with Christ, and cast themselves upon him for Pardon, Life and Salvation ; yet we find by experience, poor awakened sinners are hardly perswaded that themselves are in particular intended in those more general and indefinite Promises and Calls. Were they assured themselves were intended, it would be a mighty encouragement to them ; but that they are hardly brought to believe. The more we can appropriate any Promises to our selves in particular, the greater efficacy they will have upon our hearts for our encouragement. It is a mighty encouragement to the Taylor, when the Apostle shall speak particularly to him, and assure him *if he should believe, he should be saved and all his house.* Now God speaks particularly and determinately to the Seed of Believers, and not only offers to be a God to them, but assures them he is so already, only requires their personal performance of the conditions of the Covenant, in order to the continuance of that Relation between himself and them, and that they may have the actual injoyment of that Salvation, they are, as the Seed of such Parents, the Heirs of. And if it should be said, that they may have forfeited their Covenant-state and Relation already by their not sooner actually and explicitly recognizing the Covenant, and giving up themselves to God in Christ according to the tenour of it ; and fears, of that will render this consideration of little use to them. That Objection shall be answered by and by.

*Obj.* If it be yet said, That what encouragements soever they have to believe and take hold of the Co-

venant, yet they will soon find by experience their own inability to do it, they will find they cannot do it without the special Teachings and Operations of the Spirit; and what encouragement have they to hope for these Teachings and Operations beyond what others have? To that I add in a fifth encouragement that they have above others, and that is this: They stand nearer than the rest of Mankind to, and are the more especial Objects of the Promises of saving Grace; This I have spoken so largely to already, that I need add no more. But besides, all those other encouragements they have to believe may be improved as a help to their hope for Grace to inable them thereunto. Surely then finding themselves in a state of Peace with God, rememb'ring what a mutual Friendship and Love there hath been between God and their Parents, considering what he hath already done for them as a signal signification of his good will towards them, and having a particular Promise to assure them in particular, that as God at present is, so he will continue to be a God to them, unless by their voluntary rejecting the Covenant they disanul that their Interest; may not only be choice encouragements to them to believe and take hold of the Covenant, but to hope that God will readily vouchsafe them the Teachings and effectual Operations of his Spirit to inable them so to do, they waiting upon him in his own way. But to put a close to this second Question. We now see how great Good, what glorious Benefits and Advantages the Seed of Believers have by the Application of the Token of the Covenant to them; and from all we may conclude, that Infant-Baptism is a practice well worthy enquiring into, and contending for by all Parents that have any respect to the spiritual and eternal welfare of their Children.

## C H A P. X.

The third grand Question proposed. The duty of Parents towards their Children reduced to two Heads. Their duty to be performed immediately and directly towards them again reduced to two Heads. What they are to teach and instruct them in and about : As also what means they are to use for the rendering. Instructions given them, opened. Some rules for their right management of them in the performance of their duty, laid down. Their duty to be performed immediately towards God on the behalf of their Children, shewed. Some Motives to press them to a faithful performance of their duty, urged.

Quest. 3. **W**HAT is the duty of Parents towards their Children, as under the bond of the Covenant and bearing the Token of it ?

*Answ.* This and the next Question being frequently and largely treated of by others, I shall speak the more sparingly to them. For this Question then, the duty of Parents is considerable two ways.

1. First, As to be performed immediately and directly towards their Children.

2. Secondly, As to be performed more immediately towards God, but with reference to, and on the behalf

behalf of their Children, they are to deal with their Children in the Name, and on the behalf of God, and to deal with God, with reference to, and on the behalf of their Children.

First, For their duty immediately and directly respecting their Children, the Apostle summarily comprehends it under these two terms, *Nurture and Admonition*, and both must be of the Lord, Eph. 6. 3. *And ye Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Though the Apostle here speaks expressly only unto Fathers yet Mothers are not exempted, but included : As they are alike interested in their Children with their Husbands ; so they are to joyn with them in the holy education of them ; and says the Apostle, *bring up your Children in or with the nurture and admonition of the Lord* ; as if the Apostle should say, to your feeding, cloathing and providing necessaries for their bodies, and a comfortable subsistence in this life, add the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Here I shall do two things. 1. Briefly open their duty. 2. Add some Rules for a more successful performance of it.

1. For the first, under these two terms, we are to comprehend two things in the general.

1. First, Instruction.

2. Secondly, The Use and Application of all due and apt means subserving or conduced to their im-

\* Hortatur ut eos educent cum institutione & commonefactione Domini, hoc est, ut eos instituant, & erudiant in Doctrinâ Christianâ, & subinde piis commonefactionibus ad officia pietatis forment. Piscator, in loco.

wards their Children consists in two things in the general.

First, In teaching and instructing them. And though they are to teach and instruct them in their whole duty both towards God and Man ; yet I shall only instance in five things, wherein they are in a peculiar manner to instruct them.

I. First, They are to teach and instruct them in the knowledge of God; acquaint them with the Being of God, endeavour to convince them that there is a supreme Being whom we call God, who is the Creator and Governour of all things, from whom themselves have originally received their Beings, whose they are, and upon whom they depend, whom they must worship, and who will judge them at the last day, and then reward them according as they have obeyed or disobeyed his Commands. And as they are to instruct them in the Being of a God; so to acquaint them with the manner of his Subsistence and Nature, as revealed by his Names, Titles and Properties, as they are able to bear it. And we find Children soon comply with the notions of a Deity, and not altogether unreadily entertain especially such notions of and about his Nature, as are discoverable by, and agreeable to the light and dictates of Nature. Some have observed, that all Religion is ingrafted upon the stock of Nature ; God hath left somewhat of those Original Principles of Religion implanted in the Nature of Man at his first Creation, which facilitates the reception of the first fundamental Principles upon which all Religion is built; as a brand sooner inkindles than the green wood that hath never been in the fire. Hence Parents are to begin with the revival of such Principles and Notions as are not

utterly obliterated and blotted out of the Nature of Man, and such are these concerning the Beeing of God, his Nature and Relations towards Man as his Creator and Goverour, &c. Let but these Principles and Notions be thoroughly revived, and more fully fixed and riveted in the minds and Consciences of Children; it will greatly facilitate their reception of all higher Truths and Doctrines revealed in the Scriptures.

2. They are to teach and instruct them in the way of God's dealing with Man as his Creature, that it always hath been and still is according to some Covenant, wherein he promises somewhat of Good unto Men upon condition of their performing that duty himself hath prescribed and enjoyned; having always annexed rewards and punishments to the performance or non-performance of that duty. For Parents to instruct their Children and make them apprehensive and sensible that this always hath been, and still is the way of God's dealing with Men, will greatly conduce to their more ready entertainment of what shall be shewed them concerning the several Covenants God hath made with Men, and their states, conditions and duties as interested in the one or the other Covenant that God hath made with Man.

3. They are to teach and instruct them in and about the Covenant of Nature, or the Law of Works established with Man at his first Creation; and here they are to instruct them, in that happy estate Man was in as under that Covenant, how happy he should have been had he performed the conditions of it; what penalty was annexed to the transgression of that Law; how that Covenant was broken by *Adam* the first Parent of Mankind; how far all his posterity are concerned

concerned in that breach ; what the penalty is that all Mankind as born into the World are under, and farther subject to, as involved in that breach ; how the guilt of *Adam's* sin redounds to them ; how their Natures are corrupted and depraved ; how that corruption and depravation of their Natures flows from that first breach of that Covenant ; how they are Children of Wrath, as under that guilt, and as having their Natures so vitiated and depraved.

4. They are to instruct them, in and about the Covenant of Grace, as established in the Sacrifice, Death and Sufferings of a Mediator ; and here they are to instruct them, in the Person, Offices and Works of this Mediator ; what are the terms and conditions of this Covenant ; how far themselves are interested in it, as the Seed of believing Parents ; what Good they have already granted to them by it ; upon what terms that Good was granted, and hath been hitherto continued to them ; what is now required of them to the preservation of their Covenant-state.

5. They are to teach and instruct them in the uses and ends of their Baptism ;  
 \* what is signified by it ; how the Covenant they are received into, is sealed and confirmed by it ; what assurance they have thereby of enjoying all the Good, Benefits and Blessings promised, unless they forfeit them by the non-performance of that duty God requires on their parts ; what encouragements they have to perform that duty ; what obligations lie upon them to take hold of the Covenant, and give up themselves to God ; what their sin and misery will be in case they do it not ; how happy

\* *Doctrinam  
Baptismi teneant  
Baptizati.  
Hild.*

happy they shall be in case they do it. Thus the Lord commands the People of *Israel* to instruct their Children in the use and ends of the Passover, and the same they were doubtless to do in respect of Circumcision, and other Sacramental signs in use among them, *Exod. 12. 26, 27.* *And it shall come to pass, when your Children say unto you, What mean you by this service? then ye shall say, It is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the Children of Israel, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.* And here we may observe the usefulness of bringing Children to the administration of Baptism: to others it may occasion their enquiry after the meaning of that Ordinance; but however, whether they enquire or no, it is the duty of Parents to let them behold the administration of it, and thereupon take occasion to instruct them in the uses and ends of it. But

2. For the Use and Application of all due and apt means conducing to their imbracing, acting and practising according to these instructions given them. And thus

1. They are to keep them, as much as may be, from any notice or knowledge of any Objects, Principles, or Doctrines, as also from any such notions, or apprehensions of, and about earthly things, as by means whereof, they may be obstructed and prejudiced in their closing in with God in Christ, imbracing the Covenant, and giving themselves up to God according to the terms of it.

Preserve their minds and affections, as much as may be, from anticipations or pre-engagements, by means of which their imbracing, acting and practising according to what they are taught, would be prejudiced.

Thus

Thus, suppose Believers to have their lot cast in places where some false God is worshipped, their duty would be, to keep their Children from any notice of such a God: so where corrupt Principles and Doctrines, whether relating to worship or manners, are preached or maintained, it is the duty of Parents, what in them lies, to keep their Children from any knowledge of them, lest their minds and judgments should be infected with them; So to keep them from the sight of such things as have a tendency to vitiate their minds, and excite the corruptions of their hearts. For this reason *Aristotle* tells us a Law-giver ὅλως ἐν ταῖς πόλεως ἀιχρολογίαιν ἐξορίζειν δεῖ, viz. lest the minds of youth should be vitiated, and they should first learn to speak filthily, and then to act filthily. So again, to keep them from any such notions or apprehensions of, and about earthly things, as tend to ingage their affections to them. Parents are not a little prejudicial to their Children, to applaud their bravery, on the account of fine clothes and the like: so by insinuating the worth and excellency of Mony, Estates, Honours and the like; they should rather endeavour to convince them of the nothingness, insignificancy and vanity of these things. When Childrens minds are possessed with notions and apprehensions of a worth and excellency in such things, their desires run out after them, and they begin to promise to themselves a kind of felicity in them; whence they soon ingage in a pursuance of them, to the neglect of Christ, and that inheritance above they are born Heirs unto.

2. Frequent repetitions and inculcations of the same things greatly conduce to the ends mentioned: Children, as they receive but little at a time, so they need

need frequent repetitions and inculcations of the same things ; their understandings are weak, their memories slippery, and what impressions may be made upon their hearts and affections, soon wear off again : hence the same things must be often repeated and inculcated upon them. Indeed repetitions and inculcations of the same things are useful to the Adult : *To write the same things to you*, saith the Apostle to the *Philippians*, *to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe*, Phil. 3. 1. Men it is true are delighted in variety, and in the newness of things proposed, but saith the Apostle, *to write the same things is safe for you* : yet the same things may be written, or spoken in variety of phrases and different expressions, and so to do, is useful to prevent tediousness, and loathing ; but to have the same things frequently repeated and inculcated, if not in the same, yet in different phrases and expressions, is exceeding safe for grown Christians, and much more for Children ; yea to repeat the same things, in the same words and expressions, supposing prudence be used, is useful for them. The Lord, speaking of the Commandments, Statutes and Judgments he had given his ancient People, gives them this charge about them, that *they should teach them diligently to their Children*, Deut. 6. 7. and what he means by teaching them diligently, he explains in the following words, *thou shalt talk of them* (viz. to thy Children) *when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up* ; as much as to say, thou shalt be frequently talking of, and inculcating them upon thy Children. The capacities of Children require a frequent repetition and inculcation of the same things, as in respect of their natural food : As they can receive

ceive and digest but a little at a time, so they must be frequently fed : So in respect of instructions, which are the food of their souls, they must be frequently instructed in the same things.

3. The intermingling Exhortations, Perswasions, Intreaties, Commands, &c. with Instructions, tends greatly to render those Instructions more effectual ; it is not enough to enlighten the understanding, and inform the judgment, but the affections and passions must be wrought upon, and excited. We find the working upon, and exciting of the affections and passions in grown persons is highly serviceable to their conversion, embracement of, and steadfastness in the ways of God ; and much more must it be so in Children. Now the affections and passions are wrought upon by the means now mentioned. These Exhortations, Perswasions, Commands, &c. are conceived to be included in this word *v&g&osia*, we translate admonition ; Parents are to bring up their Children in the admonition as well as nurture of the Lord : so saith God of Abraham, *I knew Abraham that he will command his Children and his Household* ; and what the issue of that shall be he tells us, *they shall keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18. 19. of which more by and by. Such Perswasions and Exhortations, Intreaties and Commands are expressive of the affections of Parents towards, as well as their authority over their Children ; and the more Children are sensible of their Parents affection towards, and authority over them, the greater efficacy will their Instructions have upon their hearts. Their Parents are present with them, and visible to them ; God is out of their sight, their apprehensions of him can be supposed to be but low, and confused ; they live by fence,

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fence, and not by Faith. Hence an affectionate Exhortation, or Intreaty from their Parents, may, and possibly will do more with them, than the bare Commands of God ; however such Exhortations and Commands, &c. from their Parents added to the Exhortations and Commands from God in his Word, must needs rationally be more effectual. There is their Parents affection answered by a natural storge and filial affection towards them, and Paternal authority answered by a natural kind of instinct, or inclination to obey, superadded to the efficacy of those dawnings of Light, let into their understandings by Instructions given them, and of those morning-apprehensions they have of God, more effectually to induce and ingage them to act and practise accordingly. Hence this intermixture of Exhortations, Perswasions, Intreaties and Commands must needs greatly further their conversion and embracement of the Covenant.

4. Good Examples are great furtherances to Childrens falling in with, and embracement of the ways of God ; and indeed neither instructions, nor the use of any other means can be rationally expected to be successful, without this example conduce to the rendering Instructions effectual two ways.

1. They realize to Childrens apprehensions the things they are instructed in, and about : for Parents to speak of a God infinitely holy, and a perfect hater of sin ; to speak of God infinitely just, and a severe avenger of sin, &c. and yet not express any fear towards him themselves, nor take heed of what is sinful, will signify little ; Children will quickly apprehend the inconsistency between what is spoken of, or concerning God, and their Parents ways and actions. Now how can Parents expect their Children should

should believe, what their own ways and actions declare themselves believe not?

2. Examples induce and provoke to Imitation, *Exempla magis movent quam documenta*, is peculiarly true, as applyed to Children; we see how prone they are to Imitation, their manners are much formed by example; \* hence good examples not only from Parents, but others highly further their falling in with, and embracing of the ways of God.

\* Aristotle would have youth kept even from the sight of all Pictures of any Limer, excepting of such an one who

*τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἐστιν οὐδες*, represents the honest manners of worthy Men.

5. To put Children upon and inure them to holy exercises, will greatly further the ends aimed at: hence Parents should put their Children upon the practice of what they have taught them, thus they are to cause them to joyn in holy duties both publick and private.

It is prejudicial to Children to be excluded from Family duties, at least when they are capable to joyn in them, without causing distractions; and let me say for Parents to plead Children will be troublesome, when the fault is in themselves, in not bringing of them under their command, will be but a bad excuse at the last.

So again, Parents should inure them to holy exercises themselves, as Reading and Praying, and direct them in a right performance of that duty: we find both our Lord Christ, and John Baptist instructed their Disciples in the performance of that duty, and probably betimes, *Luk. ii. 1.* Let them know that all Good must come from God, and put them upon the

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the seeking for it from him ; let them know their  
continuance in a Covenant-state depends upon their  
performance of the conditions themselves, but let them  
know withall that it is God must give what himself  
requires.

6. The adding of due Correction as the case may  
require, will yet promote the same ends ; the Rod is  
the Child's ordinance, hence so frequently recommen-  
ded by *Solomon*. Though correction conveys not  
Grace to, nor can it work Grace in the soul, yet it high-  
ly subserves their gaining of Grace.

2. But secondly, Let me just touch upon some few  
Rules, that may be of use unto Parents in their right  
and successful performance of their duty towards their  
Children.

1. By grave and serious dealing with them  
about the concerns of God and their souls, with a  
gravity and seriousness becoming matters of such an  
importance. It is said of a Bishop, he must be one  
who ruleth well his own house, having his Children  
*in subjection with all gravity*, 1 Tim. 3. 4. the same  
is the duty of all Christian Parents, though eminent-  
ly required in the Ministers of the Gospel. Some deal  
with their Children in soul-affairs, as though they  
were rather in jest than earnest ; and no wonder  
though Children are neither serious, nor in good  
earnest in attending to, or practising such instruc-  
tions : Parents should labour to carry it so in all their  
words and actions, as that their Children may perceive  
the weight and importance of the things they deal  
with them about.

Instructing and chastising Children requires the  
utmost gravity and seriousness.

2. Shew as much love to God, as also as much affection towards your Children, but as little of self and passion as possibly you can: the more Children are apprehensive of these things (and quickly apprehensive they will be) the more weight will instructions have upon their hearts; the less of God, and the more of self appears in any Instructions, Counsels, Perswasions or Commands, the less will they be attended to, and regarded, *sic vice versa.*

3. Exercise Wisdom and Prudence. Wisdom and Prudence is required hardly in any thing, if in any thing at all, more than in the education and bringing up of Children; yet I shall not attempt to give any Rules in this case, neither is it in the power of any man to give such Rules and Directions, as may sufficiently furnish all Parents with that Wisdom and Prudence necessary to the right managing of themselves in the discharge of their duty towards their Children; they must have it from God, or after all, they will be greatly defective therein. I shall only intimate some Cases wherein special Wisdom is required.

1. In beginning with such Instructions as those principles connatural to them will subserve their imbracement of, to kindle the brand, if I may so speak, where it hath the greatest disposition to take fire.

2. Again, Wisdom is required in so repeating and inculcating Instructions, as that they may be most useful for the enlightning their minds, and working upon their affections; and yet may not beget tediousness or slightnes of spirit.

3. Again, much Wisdom is required in intermingling such instructions; and so administering them, as may keep up their love to, and delight in Religion,

with such instructions as may keep up a holy awe and fear in their hearts Godward.

4. Again, Wisdom is required in keeping up their encouragements, and yet preventing their presumption and formality.

5. Once again, much Wisdom is required in dealing with Children according to their different tempers and constitutions ; some are more easily wrought upon by love, others by fear ; some by gentle, others by more severe means ; some need more of the rod, others less : and variety of the like instances might be given. This is certain, the success of Parents discharge of their duty towards their Children, very much depends upon the Wisdom they are indued with, and do exercise therein.

4. Begin with your Children betimes, *Chasten thy Child betimes*, saith Solomon ; so instruct him betimes. Parents should endeavour ( were it possible ) to anticipate Satan, and put a check to the very first buddings forth of corruption, *Quò semel est imbuita recens*, &c. 'Tis the folly of most Parents to leave themselves only an after-game to play ; they sow not till the thorns have got such rooting, as that they check the seed sown ; their Childrens minds are so vitiated, that their instructions meet with stronger opposition than otherwise they would do : therefore begin with them betimes, *In the morning sow thy seed*. 'Tis applicable to our present purpose, Children have ears to hear before they have tongues to speak. That may be received by the ear and eye which the tongue cannot express ; hence Parents should not forbear instructions till their Children are capable of returning answers. But

2. The duty of Parents more immediately respects God, yet to be performed on the behalf of their Children, and thus their great duty is Prayer ; and two things in the general they are to pray for :

1. The bestowment of such endowments upon themselves, as may capacifie them for the due performance of their duty towards their Children. And of all gifts and endowments they ought to be peculiarly importunate for Wisdom and Prudence. He that gives wisdom to the Husband-man for the *casting in the Fetches and scattering the Cummin,* &c. when he hath plowed his ground and made plain the face thereof, must teach Parents wisdom to manage their duty aright towards their Children. Lower abilities managed with wisdom prove more effectual than greater without it. What encouragement Parents have to be importunate for this gift the Apostle James shews us, Jam. i. 5.

2. They are to pray for a blessing upon the performance of their duty towards their Children, with the concurrence of the Spirit to make all means used effectual. Prayer and Instruction ; yea Prayer and Correction ought to go together. The most faithful, diligent and wise discharge of duty will leave Children graceless, unless God add his blessing. Now though a Covenant-state be hereditary, yet Grace is not so, that's from God, given to whom he pleaseth in a compliance with his eternal Purpose and Decrees. But these being secret, hid in the breast of God, are not to be Parents rule in the performance of their duty, they are to perform it equally and alike unto all. Let me add, the more Faith there is in Prayer, the more prevalent it will be ; and how far, Faith may be acted with reference to Children, may

be gathered from what hath been already said. Among other things they may believe, that the promises of the first Grace do appertain to them indefinitely, as members of that Collective Body to which those Promises are made. And hence, though they cannot positively believe that these Promises shall be made good to every one of their Children, yet they may and ought to believe the truth and faithfulness of God, and answerably act a dependance upon him, with a comfortable hope that the Good promised shall be given to each one of their Children. I shall only add two or three Motives to press Parents to a faithful discharge of their duty, and so pass from this third Question.

1. Consider the manifold obligations lying upon you to be faithful, conscientious, and diligent therein ; and to pass by all others, an account of which I have already given, let me only remind you of, and a little press upon you that reference and subserviency that your discharge of your duty hath to your Childrens embracement of the Covenant, and consequently to God's bringing upon you in vouchsafing unto them the Good promised. That passage of God's concerning *Abraham* cannot well be too often inculcated upon believing Parents, *Gen. 18. 19.* There are two things peculiarly remarkable in this Scripture.

1. To mention that in the first place which is set down in the latter part of the Verse, the subserviency of Parents faithful performance of their duty to God's bringing upon them the Good promised, *viz.* with reference to their Children, *That the Lord may bring upon him what he hath spoken of him* ; as if God could not ( keeping exactly to the terms of the Covenant ) vouchsafe the Good promised to Children, unless that

Parents be faithful in the performance of their duty towards them. It seems at least very probable to infer an absolute necessity of Parents performance of their duty in order to God's giving them the Good promised in pursuance of the Promise made to them on the behalf of their Children; however this must be said, that Childrens forfeiture of their Covenant-state, and all the Good annexed thereunto, is greatly hazarded by Parents failing therein. It's true, God may extend Mercy to them, and answerably supply the neglect of Parents, by the vouchsafement of other means, as he doth to others born of unbelieving Parents, unto whom he is under no obligation by virtue of any peculiar Promise made to them: But it may seem that Parents neglect of their duty dischargeth God from that obligation he is under by his Promise made to them on the behalf of their Children, and that must needs extremely hazard their ever enjoying the Good of the Covenant. Now surely if any thing will cause sorrow, or allay the joy of believing Parents at that day, against which joy is sown for the Righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart; this will do it, to mis their Children in that day of Triumph, and that through their own default in point of duty towards them. Let me say, Is all the Good of the Covenant of so small a value, as that a fond affection shall supersede the discharge of your duty towards your Children? Or is everlasting separation from the presence of God, and the glory of his Power so small a matter, as that rather than you will put your selves to a little pains, or impose any difficulty upon your Children, you will hazard that? Will their roaring in Hell be a less evil than their crying under the smart of the Rod? Alas! what do Parents

think of Heaven or Hell, that they will hazard their Childrens loss of the one, and undergoing the other upon such trivial accounts ?

2. Consider, what excellent encouragements you have to a vigorous, faithful, and conscientious performance of your duty towards them, which is the other thing remarkable in the forementioned Scripture, *viz.* the issue and fruit of the discharge of your duty, *They shall keep the way of the Lord,* implying at least the usual concurrence of a blessing from God with the discharge of your duty, and concurrence of the Spirit to make the means used effectual. God would not assert the efficacy of the means, but upon a supposition of his concurrence with them by his own Spirit and Blessing. It may possibly seem strange to some, should I say, whether ever any of the Seed of the Righteous apostatize from the ways of God, and thereby forfeit their Covenant-state, but upon a failure in Parents in the due discharge of their duty, is a question of more difficult determination, than is usually apprehended, or appears at the first proposal of it. But besides the encouragement you have from this Scripture, how much more means have you subserving the conversion of your Children, than others, who either are unbelievers themselves, or deny their Childrens Covenant-interest, have ? how many Motives have you to press upon them ? what encouragements to propose to them ? and consequently what ground have you to hope for success, that you shall not labour in vain ? These things I had sometimes intended to have enlarged upon, but for some reasons I shall contract. You may be sufficiently furnished with encouragements from what hath been already said. And therefore,

3. Consider,

3. Consider, how great a good your Childrens conversion will be to your selves as well as unto them. Doth not the comfort of your lives depend much upon the welfare of your Children? will it not highly advance your comfort, to be able to live in the World as in a strange Land, as Heirs your selves, and as seeing your Children Joynt-heirs with you of an everlasting inheritance in Heaven? would it not be your joy to see the Kingdom of Christ upheld, his Church continued and propagated by those that proceed out of your own loyns? Besides converting Grace will make them useful and serviceable unto you both in temporals and spiritualls, See *Philemon* 11. Will it not doubly strengthen your weak hands and feeble knees, when old age comes, to have them strengthned and supported by the gracious words of your own Children? And surely, seeing Mothers have usually most need of comfort from their Children, they should be peculiarly careful to perform their duty towards them.

## C H A P. XI.

*The fourth grand Question proposed. The improvement that the Seed of Believers may and ought to make of their Covenant-state, as ratified by the Application of the Token of the Covenant, opened in four particulars. That great Question, how long the Covenant-state of the Seed of Believers is continued to them upon their Parents account, answered*

so far as is necessary to prevent such fears as either Parents or Children are subject to, as to the forfeiture of their Covenant-state in their Child-hood.

Quest. 4. **W**HAT use and improvement may and ought the Seed of Believers make of the Token of the Covenant applyed to them in their Infancy, as they grow up to years of Maturity?

*Answ.* The use and improvement they may and ought to make of it is great and of unspeakable advantage to them. To inttance in some few particulars.

1. They may and ought to improve it as a help to their understandings, that they may better, and more clearly apprehend, and conceive of the means and way through and by which they have the pardon of sin, peace with God, and must come to the actual injoyment of Salvation, (which as the Seed of such Parents they were born Heirs unto) which are the Blood of Christ, as applyed to them for the purging away the guilt of sin, and the Spirit of Christ, as granted for the renovation of their natures. The Sacra-ments or Seals of the Covenant present to the eye what the Word presents to the ear, and they are for the mutual illustration the one of the other. Now as this way, and these means are considerable under different notions, so they are shadowed and represented by different symbols or signs. The Blood of Christ, as purging away the guilt of sin, was represented in Circumcision as to be shed; but it is represented in Baptism as already shed, and applyed to the party baptized. The body of sin was represented in Circum-

cision

cision under the notion of a superfluity to be amputed and cut off: 'Tis represented in Baptism under the notion of a defilement or pollution, which is removed by washing. But the use of the one and the other in general was and is the same, namely to represent to the mind that way, and those means, by and through which the soul hath remission of sin, peace with God, and is brought to future Salvation. Now Children, when they are instructed about this way and these means, they may and ought to reflect upon their Baptism, and see how both are represented and illustrated thereby, and by means thereof, they may come to more clear notions and conceptions of and about them, Instructions by signs are adapted to the capacities of Children. Indeed the Sacraments are ordained in a compliance with the weakness of Christians in general. But

2. Which follows upon this, by the consideration of their Baptism they will be kept under a due sense of the indispensable necessity of the Application of the Blood of Christ to them for their discharge from the guilt of sin; and of the Spirit for their Regeneration and Renovation, in order to the continuing of their peace with God, and actual enjoyment of future Salvation. And a threefold advantage will arise herefrom.

1. They will be put upon serious enquiries, how it is with themselves, whether they have the Blood of Christ so applyed or no? and whether they are so wash'd by Regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, or no?

2. How they may attain to the one and the other, and be quickned up to a diligent use of those means, and

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and performance of those duties they are directed to,  
subservient thereunto.

3. They will be kept from any attempts to establish a righteousness of their own, on the one hand, and on the other from presumptuous confiding in Christ without a real work of Regeneration and Sanctification. Baptism preacheth to all the way of pardon, peace with God, and future Salvation, to be by washing; by washing away the guilt of sin by the Blood of Christ, and the filth of sin by Sanctification. And this indeed is the use and improvement that all Christians should make of their Baptism. But

3. They may and ought to improve their Baptism to ingage, provoke, and stir up themselves to a closure in with the Covenant, and use of all means conducing to their injoyment of the Grace and Blessings of it. As this is a special end of God in appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Seed of Believers; so they are especially to be taught to make that improvement of it, and answerably they may and ought to do it. What obligations ly upon them to close in with the Covenant, and give up themselves to God in Christ, according to the tenour of it, arising from the Application of the Token to them, have been already declared: And Parents ought diligently to inform and instruct them in and about them; which would they do, and back those instructions with a due use of all the forementioned means to render them effectual, it may be rationally expected, they would have no little weight upon their hearts. And 'tis no small part of the Mercy of the Seed of Believers, as brought under the bond of the Covenant by the Application of the Token thereof unto them, that they have such obligations upon them,

them, whereby to provoke and stir up themselves to an early seeking after God, and enquiring after his ways.

4. They may and ought to improve their Baptism for the help of their Faith and Hope, and for their encouragement to take hold of the Covenant: as also to seek unto God for Grace to enable them so to do. What an help it may be to their Faith and Hope, and what an encouragement to take hold of the Covenant they have thereby, may be concluded from what hath been already said; and I must still leave it to their Parents to instruct them therein, and shall hasten; only before I put a close to the whole, I shall briefly touch upon one Question, which that I should speak somewhat unto seems necessary. And that is, how long the Covenant-state of the Seed of Believers, and consequently their right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant, is continued to them as the Seed of such Parents? When do the conditions of the Covenant become incumbent upon themselves, so as that upon their failure in the performance of that their Covenant-state is forfeited?

*Answe.* It must be granted, This is a Question of no easie resolution, neither is it meet upon several accounts that it should be perfectly determined. The exact resolution of it must be left to that day, when all secrets shall be made manifest; and therefore I shall not adventure far into it. I shall only offer some more general things to consideration, which may sufficiently obviate and prevent such doubts and fears that either Parents or Children are subject to, concerning their having forfeited their Covenant-state, as might obstruct their respective due improvement of it for the several uses and ends aforementioned.

1. Let the unsearchable riches of the Goodness, Grace and Love of God in Christ be considered. The Scripture every where speaks of the Goodness, Grace and Love of God in Christ as investigable, and incomprehensible by any humane understanding. Hence are such passages, *Oh how great is thy Goodness?* Psal. 31. *How precious is thy Grace?* Psal. 36. So, *God so loved the World.* The Love of Christ is said to be *past knowledge.* And from the consideration of the unsearchable riches of this Goodness, Grace and Love of God in Christ, it may be concluded, at least comfortably hoped, that he hath not been very strait or rigid (if I may so speak) with the Seed of his People, and consequently hath not limited their standing under the Covenant upon their Parents account to the very first instant of their capability of any actual knowledge of supernatural things, or use of reason. We may rationally suppose, he hath allowed them some time to attain to some distinct knowledge, and to use their reason in closing in with, or rejecting the terms of the Covenant. And hence it must needs be exceeding useful for Parents to acquaint their Children betimes with the Nature of God, or if you will, which is all one, (though that expression hath been most unreasonably quarrelled at by some) it must needs be highly useful to Children to be well acquainted with, and instructed in and about the Person of Christ, into whose hand the administration of the Covenant is put. And here we have an instance of the usefulness of acquaintance with the Person of Christ, with reference to things more darkly revealed in the Scriptures. It is not expressly revealed just when the performance of the condition of the Covenant becomes indispensibly necessary to Children for the preservation

preservation of their Covenant-state: but now the knowledge of Christ, or of God in him, as how unsearchable rich in Goodness, Grace and Love he is, may much relieve both Parents and Children under those doubts and fears they are subject to about the forfeiture of their Covenant-state: They may conclude certainly God hath not been so rigid upon them, as to limit their standing in it to so short a time, as that the forfeiture of it shall be little less than necessary, or hardly in an ordinary way unavoidable.

2. It may be further considered, that it may be reasonably supposed, that God hath so extended the Covenant to the Seed of his People, as that their acceptance or refusal of it should appear to Angels and Men justly and rationally rewardable or punishable. This may be inferred from the Justice and Wisdom of God, taken in conjunction with his ultimate end (*viz.* the Glorification of all his Attributes) in his dealings, especially in a Covenant-way with Man. Now this seems necessarily to require that so much time should be allowed them, as so far to understand, and make a judgment of the Covenant, as containing such Promises upon such terms, as that their acceptance or rejection should be free and voluntary, and not either a mere enforcement of their Parents on the one hand, or on the other not the mere product of Childish weakness and vanity. What may be objected against this from God's punishing Original sin in Infants will receive a ready answer from the difference between their cases, and the cases of the Infant-seed of Believers we now speak of. But

3. I would offer at least as matter of enquiry, whether the Covenant is or can be broken by the Seed of Believers any others ways, than it would be broken

by

by Believers themselves, supposing it possible for them to break it, which we grant, all things considered, it is not. Now it is not the bare suspension of the due acting and exercise of Grace, nor nor every commission of sin, no not of particular sins of a very heinous nature, that breaks the Covenant between God and them. One of these three things I conceive are necessary thereunto. Either

1. A Man must make a free and voluntary choice of some false God, and answerably freely and voluntarily ingage in the worship and service of such a God. Or else

2. Must make a free and voluntary choice of some temporal good as his portion, and answerably set that up in his heart and affections above God, and pursue it as his supreme and chief good. Or else

3. A Man must with a free and full consent of will ingage in some way of moral impieties, as designing, if not explicitly, yet implicitly the utmost of what happiness he expects in this life in the gratifica-

tion and satisfaction of the lusts of his own heart. \* I confess these things require a larger explication, but I can but touch upon them in general at pre-

\* See Doctor Preston on the Covenant. sent : But until one or another of these things be done, the Covenant is not broken, nor the Covenant-relation between God and them dissolved. Now I shall not be positive, only propose it as a matter of enquiry, whether the Covenant can be broken any other way by the Seed of Believers? This we may observe, that we have no instance in Scripture of God's rejecting any of the Seed of his People out of Covenant, but upon some overt act on their parts, evidently declaring their rejection of the Covenant one or the

other

other of those ways mentioned, and that when grown up to a capacity of making a free and voluntary choice. Those two instances of *Ishmael* and *Esau* are remarkable, and may be useful for the guiding our judgments in this matter. The one, viz. *Ishmael* evidently declares his rejection of the Covenant by persecuting his brother *Isaac*. The other, viz. *Esau* by selling his birth-right. Now we know both these were grown up to a capacity of making a free and voluntary choice. 'Tis true God may withdraw himself from some, and leave them to such a rejection of the Covenant sooner than he doth others; which may be a caution to all the Seed of Believers to take heed of deferring personally to take hold of the Covenant. But whether their Covenant-state be forfeited before such an actual rejection of the Covenant, may be questioned.

4. Let it be considered, that until Childrens rejection of the Covenant one or another of the ways mentioned become apparent by some overt act on their parts, both their Parents and themselves may comfortably hope ( suppose they cannot positively conclude ) the Covenant is not broken by them. While their omissions or commissions are only such as are incident to Saints, there is ground to hope the Covenant may stand firm. And there is a double ground for such a hope.

1. A possibility or probability that the Covenant may yet be continued to them upon their Parents account. This appears from the foregoing consideration.

2. There is a possibility or probability that a seed of Grace may be wrought or implanted in the soul, though it have not exerted it self in any sensible acts,

but

but hath been suppressed and kept under by the vain workings of a childish and youthful mind, and budgings forth of corruption. A seed of Grace may be, and often is sown in the hearts of the Seed of Believers in the very dawning of their Youth or Childhood, which yet discovers not it self for a long time after, at least in any sensible acts of Grace. And hence it is that so many of the Seed of the Righteous can give no account of the time or means of their conversion. And it may be from this Seed of Grace, that the Soul, though it have not actually recognized the Covenant, nor explicitly closed in with God in Christ, yet is preserved from rejecting the Covenant any of the ways mentioned. Now whilst such as are descended from believing Parents have any rational ground to hope that the Covenant between God and them is inviolate, they may take great encouragement from the consideration of it to close in with Christ, and seek for renewing Grace. Yet

5. Let me add one thing more, and that is this, While the Seed of Believers are kept from an absolute rejection of the Covenant, though they may have a great while neglected to recognize it, and make an actual saving close with Christ, and answerably may not yet have a saving work of Grace wrought in them, there is ground of hope, they may yet abide for God, and God may abide for them, as the Prophet speaks, *Hos. 3. 3.* And suppose the Covenant should be forfeited according to the exact terms of it, and God might have justly taken the forfeiture, yet the consideration of the Covenant as entred with them in their Infancy, as the Seed of such Parents, may be improved by them as a very great encouragement at last to take hold of the Covenant. God in such cases is exceeding ready

ready to renew his Covenant with the Seed of his People. This seems to be one of the great encouragements that the Jews will have to return unto God, when he takes away the vail from off their hearts ; behold, say they, *We come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God,* Jer. 3. 22. The words are, as an invitation from God to them to return, so a Prophesie of their answering that invitation in the latter age of the World. Now they will not be able to lay claim to an actual Covenant-relation between God and them, for that Covenant was long since broken through their unbelief ; but they have abode for God, and God hath abode for them, and as having so abode the one for the other, they call him their God, and encourage themselves by the consideration of the designation ( as I may so speak ) that God hath made of them for himself, and of himself to be a God and Husband unto them, giving them a kind of incomplete and remote interest in him, to return to God. Those that God hath kept for himself, and for whom he abides, he will readily receive when they return to him : And this may greatly encourage Parents with reference to their Children as grown up ; though they do not evidence any saving work of Grace, yet they are kept from one or another of the ways whereby the Covenant is broken ; it may be they abide for God, and he abides for them, he may keep them out of a design yet at last to marry them to himself. And as it may encourage Parents in their hopes concerning their Children, so it may greatly encourage Children to close in with Christ, and thereby renew their Covenant with God. So that we may see, though it cannot be properly determined how long the Covenant-interest of Children is continued upon their Parents

account, yet that should be no prejudice to their taking the full encouragement to believe, and close in with Christ, and seek for that Grace promised to enable them thereunto, that their Covenant-state hath an aptitude to yeeld to them. They may take all the encouragements afore declared that they have, though there be an uncertainty about the precise time when the condition of the Covenant devolves upon themselves. To come then to a close; I shall only speak a few words to the Children of Believers, and let me say to you, You now see what a glorious state you are in asunder the Covenant, and interested in the Promises thereof. Will you now refuse so great Salvation? yea, will you not only refuse so great Grace when offered, but reject it when granted to you, by neglecting to take hold of the Covenant already entred with you, or seeking unto God for his Spirit, through whose assistance your duty will be made easie and delightful to you? and this not only when you are under the greatest obligations to accept of the Covenant, but when you have so many encouragements above what the rest of Mankind have to hope for a ready acceptation with God, and concurrence of his Spirit and Blessing to assist you in the performance of your duty, and succeed all your endeavours for Grace? Oh how will you of all Persons appear at the great day of the Lord that is ready to come upon you? Where do you think to stand at that day? Were you to get into such an estate, your encouragements would be less; but it is only your continuance in that state that you are to secure. God hath (as I may so speak) brought you again into Paradise, and will you again cast your selves out? Surely of all Persons in the World you will be least able to relieve your selves

selves under your misery, by pleading the necessity of your ruine, that it was *Adam* the first Parent of Mankind, that brought it upon you. You are discharged from the guilt you were under as in his loyns, you are actually received into the Covenant of Grace. The Law cannot condemn you, 'tis only your refection of the new Covenant, and that when actually entred with you that can be your condemnation. And if you say we cannot change our own natures; remember you are of that House or Family to which the Promises of saving Grace do appertain, yea you are in a peculiar and especial manner in some respects above the rest of that House or Family the Objects of these Promises, and therefore know your own Mercies and Priviledges, and do not wilfully cast your selves out of so glorious an estate, nor deprive your selves of such a glorious Inheritance, or Inheritance in glory you were born Heirs unto.

## P O S T S C R I P T.

**S**O great and glorious are those priviledges, benefits and advantages that have been assigned to the seed of Believers, as received into the Covenant of Grace, and having the Covenant with the promises appertaining to them ratified sealed and confirmed to them by the application of the token thereof, that it cannot be rationally expected that what hath been said should meet with a ready embracement by conscientious Christians, while either the grounds of that their Covenant Interest and right to the token, or the necessary redundancy of these priviledges benefits and advantages therefrom remain obscure and inevident to them : As for the necessary redundancy of these priviledges benefits and advantages from their Covenant-state, taken in conjunction with the promises appertaining to them, as the one and the other are ratified sealed and confirmed by the application of the token, I conceive that is sufficiently evident from the foregoing discourse. I shall add no more to that ; But it seems somewhat necessary that I should a little reflect upon both the grounds laid to their Covenant-Interest, and the due-ness of the application of the token to them on the account thereof (for the establishment of which I have amongst others cast in my mite in a Treatise sometime since published) which in the gene<sup>r</sup> are these two.

First, the tenour of the Covenant it self both in respect of the promissory and preceptive part of it.

Secondly, the practice of the Church and People of God throughout all ages in appropriating the Covenant with the promises of it, and applying the token to their Infant-seed, notified to us partly by Scripture, and partly by Ecclesiastical History ; because two late Authors have endeavoured to raise some dust for the obscraing both of them, and hiding their evi-dence from persons of less percing understandings and weaker Judgment: As for the one of them, viz. Mr. Danvers, his main design being only to hide the latter of these grounds, and that as the knowledg of it is conveyed to us by Ecclesiastical History wh<sup>ch</sup> we stand not much upon, it being enough, if so be it evi-dently appear from Scripture that the tenour of the Covenant be such as necessarily infers the Infant-seed of Believers interest

in it, and right to the token of it, and that answerably the practice of the Church and People of God, during the times Scripture-records extend unto, was to appropriate the Covenant, and apply the token of it to their infant Seed. Hence I shall add little beyond what I have elsewhere said for the scattering of that dust raised by him, partly because the main design he hath seen meet to lay-out himself in pursuance of is but of an inferiour importance, and more especially because of the little ground there is, to fear that what he has done in pursuance of his design should be much regarded in such an age of light as this is; the practice of the Church being so generally among all learned Men known to be otherwise than he endeavours to represent it; besides, his own Book carries a sufficient Antidote against any evil influence it might otherwise have upon wise Men: and therefore I shall immediately come to the other, viz., Mr. *Hutchison*; I am more especially concerned in his attempts, which are to obscure that foundation laid to the Covenant-interest and Baptism of the Infant-seed of Believers in the tenour of the Covenant it self, in order whereunto he has made publick a small Treatise concerning the Covenant and Baptism, composed Dialogue-wise between a Baptist and an Anti-Pædo-Baptist, with some Animadversions upon a late Piece put forth by my self in answer to Mr. *Danvers* his Treatise of Baptism. As for the Gentleman himself, I am an equal stranger to him as to Mr. *Danvers*, and therefore can have no prejudice against either of their Persons, neither would I in the least discourage or oppose any in any attempts to further the decision of this great Controversie; why should I grudge any the liberty that my self have taken? only I could wish that those, that conceive themselves under a call to appear either in the defence of what they conceive to be according to truth, or against what they conceive to be opposite thereto, would remember that exhortation of the Apostle to *Timothy*, where he exhorts him to shew himself a Workman that need not be ashamed. 'Tis true, unavoidable failures will attend humane weakness and imperfection, which may justly cause somewhat of shame; but notwithstanding them, the design and intendment of that exhortation may be answered. Whether our Author have shewed himself such a Workman will presently appear; whether himself be so free from Gall and Vinegar (which he so vehemently impeaches his Opposites writings of) as becomes a reprobate, I shall leave to the judgment of others; 'tis what he hath written, not the manner of his writing, that I shall concern my self about. To begin with this Treatise of the Covenant; three things ly so obvious

vious in it, that to me ( how it may be to others I know not ) it is utterly useless as to the design carried on in it, which I shall only remark, and leave it to every one to value and improve it as they see cause.

The first is the mistakes he proceeds upon, to give only a two-fold instance.

First, He supposes, the only ground that can be laid to the Church-membership and Baptism of Infants, is their relation to *Abraham* as his Seed. Hence having, as he supposes, proved that they can stand in no such relation to him, he conceives he has utterly overthrown their Church-membership and Baptism, thus *Page 3*. A gross mistake, we found their Church-membership and Baptism upon the tenour of the Covenant as made with *Abraham's* Seed in their Generation, that is, with them and their natural Children, but whether they are to have the denomination of, and are to be reckoned among *Abraham's* Seed, is another Question. And if it be said

*Obj.* But we do account them as *Abraham's* Seed, though we do not ground their Church-membership and Baptism thereupon.

*Answ.* It's true we do so; but then it will be said, how can we avoid the absurdities mentioned, *Page the 5.*

*Answ.* They are no other than what our Author himself fathers upon the Holy Ghost ( to use his Phrase ) in affirming some Infants to be saved without a personal Faith; for it may be thus argued; If none are saved but such as believe, then no Infants can be saved; but the antecedent is true, *Mark 16. He that believes shall be saved:* and if it be said that's meant of the Adult; the same supposed absurdity will follow; for, according to our Author, then Christ must be supposed to say, he that believes and he that believes not shall be saved. Let him avoid the absurdity in the one, and we shall alike avoid the absurdity in the other.

Another mistake that he proceeds upon is, That at least some Pædo-Baptists may ascribe their Childrens interest in the Covenant to *Abraham's* Faith, and consequently may plead that though their Children have no right to the Covenant by virtue of their Parents Faith, yet they may have a right to it by virtue of *Abraham's*, thus *Page 12*; and he spends about ten Pages to confute this Plea that he supposes some Pædo-Baptists may make: which is a mere mistake about his Opposers Principles, or rather a mere impertinency; for where hath he found in all the writings of Pædo-Baptists such a Plea managed? and hence

whereas

whereas he supposes himself to have utterly overthrown the chief grounds laid by Pædo-Baptists to the Covenant-interest and Baptism of the Infant-seed of Believers, and thereupon tells us *Page 22.* he might end the matter there ; the truth is, he hath said nothing at all to the purpose, but proceeded merely upon mistakes ; neither the one nor the other of the grounds that he supposes Pædo-Baptists bottom their claim to the Covenant-interest and Baptism of their Infant-seed upon, is the true ground they bottom that their claim upon ; whence his discourse hitherto hath been utterly impertinent, of no use at all as to the end he designs by it.

Another thing rendring his whole discourse useless to me, is his assuming and taking for granted without the least shew or proof what he knew, at least might have known, is absolutely denied by at least some if not a considerable part of Pædo-Baptists. I shall instance in three things :

First, That the Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generation did extend to and take in all his Seed at least descended by *Isaac* and *Jacob* during their first-Testament-administration, and that merely as his Seed ; upon this supposition he proceeds in a considerable part of his Book ; but now he knew, at least might have known, that this is absolutely denied, and on the other hand it is affirmed, that *Jacob*, who was *Abraham's* grandchild, was not in Covenant merely as he was of *Abraham's* Posterity, but as he was the child of believing *Isaac* included with him in that Phrase, *thy Seed in their Generations.*

Secondly, He assumes and takes for granted, that the Covenant of Grace is made with the Elect as such, and consequently that all the Elect and only they are in the Covenant of Grace ; hence he tells us *Page 23.* that the Covenant or Promise of eternal Life ( which he calls ( and I blame him not for it ) the Covenant of Grace ) is only proper to the Elect. This he might have known would be denied ; and it is on the contrary affirmed that no Covenant is actually made with any of the Elect as such.

Thirdly, He affirms, and takes it for granted, that that Covenant, called by the Apostle *the old Covenant*, which was then vanishing, is a Covenant made with *Abraham*, which he might have known is denied, and that it is affirmed, that that Covenant spoken of by the Apostle, is that Covenant made with the People of *Israel* at Mount *Sinai* ; and his affirming so many things, and proceeding in a considerable part of his Book upon a supposition of the truth of them, when they are all mistakes and unsound

suppositions, his whole Discourse must needs be, if not wholly, yet in a great measure useless.

Thirdly, That which yet further renders his Treatise altogether useless to me, is the great confusion attended with several absurdities and contradictions that it labours under : thus for his whole Discourse upon that of *Gen. 17. 7*, beginning *Page 22.* and reaching to *Page 39.* this confusion, with the absurdities and contradictions attending it, will appear, if we take notice of some of his assertions, and compare them one with another, together with what they do, either as taken singly or joynly, necessarily infer and imply, thus :

First, He positively affirms, that the Covenant of Grace, and its Administration, are two distinct Covenants, thus, *Page 23.* and tells us ~~Page~~ 93. that the Covenant of Circumcision, which must necessarily intend that Covenant which before he affirmed to be the Administration of the Covenant of Grace, may be called a Covenant of Works, and then a Covenant of Works may be the Administration of the Covenant of Grace ; which, whether rational and congruous, I shall leave all Men to judge.

Secondly, He expressly affirms, that the Administration of the Covenant of Grace under the New Testament is called the New Covenant ; thus again, *Page 23.* where it is evident, he hath reference to *Heb. 8. 8.* and then all those Promises there mentioned by the Apostle of God's putting his Law in the mind are not of the substance, only appertain to the Administration of the Covenant of Grace.

Thirdly, He affirms, at least necessarily implies, that that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promises to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, as made to one, yea to one and the same Person, as considered under one notion, appertains only to the Administration, but as made to another or to the same Person considered under another notion, is of the essence and substance of the Covenant of Grace, thus *Page 26.* he tells us (speaking of this very Promise) that in it God promised only to *Abraham's* fleshly Seed to be a God to them in giving them the Land of *Canaan*, but to his spiritual Seed to be a God to them in giving unto them eternal Life ; and he takes *Isaac* to be the subject of the Promise as taken both ways, and the Promises as made to *Abraham's* fleshly Seed he calls the Covenant of Circumcision, which elsewhere he says was but the Administration of the Covenant, and may be called a Covenant of Works. And what confusion and what absurdities this implies, let every one judge. But to get out of these dark labyrinths,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, He affirms, that *Isaac* himself by virtue of his fleshly descent, as he speaks, had no interest in the Covenant of Grace, so he tells us *Page 27.* and yet,

Fifthly, He positively affirms, that none had or have an interest in the Covenant of Grace, but through a personal Faith in Christ, thus *Page 28.* which as it directly contradicts what he had said of the Covenant of Grace, its being made only with the Elect, and with all them ; for sure he will grant some are Elect that are not actual Believers : so it utterly deprives *Isaac* as well as all the rest of *Abraham's* Seed, and indeed all Infants whatsoever, of any benefit by the Covenant of Grace, by which yet he affirms them to be saved, supposing their Election and Death in their Infancy. Let us see then what a Good God promised to *Isaac* as one of *Abraham's* Children, why only this, that he would be a God to him in giving him the Land of *Canaan*, which yet he never did, nor ever intended to give him : Of what use such a confused absurd and contradictory discourse can be to any, I cannot imagine. I might yet further shew what renders his discourse useless to me, (*viz.*) his overlooking several of none of the least forcible Scriptures and Scripture-arguments produced by his Opposers in confirmation of their Judgements and Practice ; but I shall go no further, but leave his Book to every one to make what use they see meet of it. And proceed to his Animadversions upon my answer to Mr. *Danvers*. Indeed would but Readers take Mr. *Danvers's* Book and my Answer, with my former Treatise so often referred to, and his Animadversions, and peruse them with equal and unbiassed minds, it would be all that I desire ; yet that all Men may see how needless a thing it is to make any Returns to such Replyes, as these Animadversions carry a shew of, and may know how to regulate their expectations for the future,

I shall with much brevity review them. My Answer consists of three parts.

In the first I lay down several considerations with reference to Mr. *Danvers's* authorities. In the two first, which Mr. *Hutchinson* more especially takes notice of, I charge him with unfaithfulness and impertinency, in respect of both which Mr. *Hutchinson* pretends his vindication. For the former, (*viz.*) his unfaithfulness, I only gave two Instances, and both in his Quotations out of the *Magde-Burgesian History*, for the truth of which charges, I shall refer the Reader to that Famous History ; with this only remark beyond my Answer it self, that there is a vast difference between, saying, they find they baptiz'd

baptised only the Adult, and they only find they baptized the Adult: indeed they neither say the one or the other, but the direct contrary; yet allow our Opposers the utmost they can with the least shew of reason desire, it is only the latter that can be said of them; And surely there is a greater difference between saying they find they baptized only the Adult, and they only find the Adult were baptized, than is between two six pences and a shilling: hence no Man can excuse him of unfaithfulness; but he will find at last he hath given just cause to his own Conscience to accuse himself. For the other (*viz.*) his impertinencies, and thus Mr. Hutchinson pretends his vindication two ways.

First, By way of Recrimination.

Secondly, By acquitting his Book of that charge.

For this latter I shall only refer the Reader to my Book, with the instances there given.

For the former, I have only this to say: Whether that instance given by Mr. Hutchinson will prove his charge, I shall not be Judge, but this may be said, for me to be guilty only of one impertinency (and but one is charged upon me,) is no just vindication of Mr. Danvers in the multitude I have charged upon him. And this I shall add, that had I known all Mens hearts, as well as Mr. Hutchinson pretends to know mine, and had seen no such objection, as that supposed impertinency designs the obviating of, I had not been guilty of that one neither, but that such an objection may possibly enter into the minds of men Mr. Hutchinson's Book abundantly confirms me, and therefore I shall be so far further impertinent, as to tell him, I am yet in *status quo*, and consequently if I had any such design as he intimates his suspicion I had, it has miscarried, only I have this in lieu, that being freed from family-intanglements, I have a greater liberty to attend the service of Christ in vindicating his truths from such assailants. But to go on, the second part of my Answer shews the insufficiency of Mr. Danvers proofs for Believers Baptism in opposition to that of Infants, with reference to Mr. Hutchinson's Animadversions. To this part I shall only remark three things, and leave them.

First, Is his compliance with me, in what he yet seems, and that with severe reflections upon me, to oppose, thus in all those instances I had given of things indeterminable by the Commission for the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of Baptism, to evidence the necessity of taking in other Scriptures for the full understanding of Christ's mind therein.

Now Mr. *Huthinson* himself does, what I say we ought to do, neither dares he deny any of those things I offer to consideration to shew the invalidity of Mr. *Danvers* his Argument drawn from that Commission ; and yet with what vehemency does he seem to oppose it ?

The second is the gross mistakes Mr. *Hutchinson* proceeds upon ; thus he mistakes my very design in this part of my Book, supposes me to be proving Infant-Baptism, when that is none of my design or business ; that he proceeds on this mistake is evident as from variety of Passages, so eminently from that Paragraph *Page 21.* beginning about line 18. so also from *Page 55.* upper end, hence what he animadverts with the greatest shew of plausibility as concerning the baptizing of the Children of Unbelievers, *Bells, &c.* *Page 17.* is wholly impertinent : Alas ! how easie to shew, that that will not prove any Doctrine or Practice, which was never designed for that end ?

Again, as he mistakes my design and business, so he mistakes about the ground I would have laid for Infant-Baptism, had it been my work there to prove that Practice ; Hence he supposes that I take it for granted, that Infants were Church-members under the Law, *Page 22.* when I neither did, nor had any occasion to meddle with their Church-membership either under the Law, or under the Gospel : And he still goes upon his mistakes in his attempts to shew the repeal of that Priviledge, from *Paul's* preaching that the *Gentiles* ought not to circumcise their *Children*, he supposes that Circumcision gave a right to, as well as the actual possession of Church-membership, and that we hold the command for Circumcision did virtually include a command for Baptism, both which are gross mistakes. That which gave a right to Church-membership was the Covenant, and it is the command to keep the Covenant that obliges to Baptism : but Mr. *Hutchinson* either cannot, or will not distinguish between that command as more generally laid down, and reaching all *Abraham's* Seed, whether natural or mystical, and the command laid upon *Abraham's* Seed to observe that special Rite of Circumcision, as the Covenant, that is, the Token of the Covenant, then to be kept : and alas ! what heed can be given to Men that proceed upon such gross mistakes ?

Thirdly, That which lies alike plain and obvious with both the foregoing particulars is his overlooking what he ought to have taken notice of. Thus he wholly overlooks all that I had written in my former Treatise designedly for the proof of Infant-Baptism, and whereunto I often refer in this my Answer, though he

he had seen it : So he takes no notice of what intimations I gave of offering something further to publike view ( which is now made publick ) concerning the Doctrine of the Covenant, as Infants are concerned therein ; and from his overlooking of both a considerable part of his Animadversions are either wholly impertinent, as to me, or in answering a matter before he hath heard it ; take for an instance his whole Discourse upon that Promise , *Acts 2. 39.* beginning *Page 26.* and ending *Page 30.* yea he overlooks what is written in this very Book he animadverts upon. Hence *Page 11.* he calls for a reconciliation of our seeming contradictions, which had been needless, had he attended to what he might have found in *Page 13, 14,* *15* of my Answer ; Hence again are those Questions *Page 30.* about the Salvation of all in the houses of Believers, which are answered at the *113th Page* and so on of my Answer ; and Men will make but sorry work in their Replyes to our Animadversions upon any Book, when they overlook what their Antagonists have written, or declare their intentions to write.

Thirdly , My Answer consists in a vindication of those grounds laid by Pædo-Baptists for their Judgment and Practice. As to what Mr. *Hutchinson* animadverts upon this part, I need say little, he seems to have been himself utterly at a loss what to say, yea he seems to be in a kind of maze, witness that Argument, ( the only Argument he lays down syllogistically in his Animadversion ) *Page 39.* unless he be greatly abused by the Printer ; witness also his crying out *Ignoratio Elenchi*, where no Argument was laid down by me ; yet once again witness his reasonings *Page 47.* Hence he wholly passes over these several Arguments I had occasionally laid down to prove the tenour of the Covenant to be such as infallibly infers the interest of the Seed of Believers in it, excepting only, that afterwards he singles out here and there a passage without due regard to their Contexts, and animadverts upon them at his pleasure, and himself becomes opponent, and pretends to determine three of those four Questions I had said the resolution of which were necessary, and sufficient for the discovery of the grounds laid in the Covenant, as at first established with *Abraham*, for Infant-Baptism, which he only does by a naked repetition of Mr. *Danvers* unproved dictates, with the addition of some by-discourses which appertain not to the Questions proposed, and yet hath the confidence to conclude *Page 47.* So then these things being found mere mistakes on Mr. *Whistons* side, we may conclude

conclude they have no footing in the Covenant for Infant-Baptism.

And also what does he think of the Men, even of his own perswafion ? can he think there is any of them so weak, or so far blinded, as not to see the frjvolousness of such Animadversions ? But not to tire the Reader, only I must beg Mr. Hutchinson's patience a little longer, I have a few words to him and have done.

First, Sir, I assure you I have read, yea had read, long before my Answer to Mr. Danvers saw the light, that Exercitation of Doctor Owen, and in special that part of it you refer me to, and can find nothing in that, or any other of his writings, as a cure to that ignorance you speak of, I am at as great a loss about those Promises Mr. Danvers mentions as I was before, and must tell you, you greatly mistake, and consequently greatly wrong that learned and judicious Author. How you and Mr. Danvers look upon your selves I know not, but certainly I should be justly censured as a very unworthy Man, should I wrest Authors words, who are yet alive, to countenance my own sentiments in a contradiction to their known practice, before I had consulted the Authors themselves, and known how they would reconcile their words and practice. Will you but read the whole Exercitation, and allow him the liberty that all writers, whether sacred or humane, use, you will find he is vastly more for me than for you ; He is only shewing how God did preserve Abraham's natural Posterity as grown up in a visible standing under the Covenant till our Lord Christ came, that the Promise made to him concerning the *Messias* coming of his loyns might be accomplished, he meddles not with the case of Infants, but supposeth them visibly in Covenant as the Seed of Parents visibly so ; when will you leave thus to abuse Authors whose names are preeious in all the Churches of Christ ? But

Secondly, I have a few things to reccommend to your Conscience, and these are of two sorts.

First, Such as concern my self, thus *Page 3.* where you use the Poets words, so *Page 5. line 10, 11. Page 26. line the last, Page 22. line 1, 2.* with others of a like nature : can you prove what you have written ? if not, what will you call these things ?

Secondly, Such as concern matter of Fact : thus see what you write *Page 3.* where do I say Mr. Danvers Book is all forgery,

or

or leave that to the Readers observation? See also *Page 4. line 2.* again see what you write *Page 34.* three last lines, and compare it with my Answer *Page 39.* and *40.* will you or any Man else deny what I there take for granted? Again see what you write *Page 7. line 24, 25.* Is the silence of the Scripture, as absolutely considered, my beloved Argument, yea or any Argument at all? I only enquire (and give my Reasons for the affirmation,) whether, supposing the Covenant was extended to the Seed of Believers under the first Testament, ( which I judged I had formerly sufficiently proved that it was,) what may be truly said of the silence of the Scripture, ( not whether the silence of the Scriptures as absolutely taken ) concerning the Baptism of Infants do not make it vastly more probable that they ought, then that they ought not to be baptized. and that supposition being granted, I judge I shall have but few gain-sayers. Yet again, see what you write *Page 50. line 1, 2.* and compare it with my Answer, *Page 117, 118, 119.* and see whether there is any such reason given by me or no; you may also reflect upon your *18th Page,* and consider, whether what I suppose be a granting that the commission was given only with respect to the Adult. Sir, I cannot think you can have such a value for your Animadversions as you suppose me to have for my Book, as for others I can hardly think there is any one learned Man of your own Perswasion but will blush to see such Animadversions fly abroad from the pen of any of their party. Sir, I have only one thing more, and that is to intreat you not to complain of unmerciful dealing; will you seriously review your Book; you will find I have dealt gently with you; and that you may not say I have wronged you, if you desire it, and can procure the testimony of any two learned Anti-Pædo-Baptists that they judge your Book deserves, or can know that any two conscientious learned Pædo-Baptists judge it deserves a more full consideration, your desire (if providence interpose not) shall be gratified.

F I N I S.

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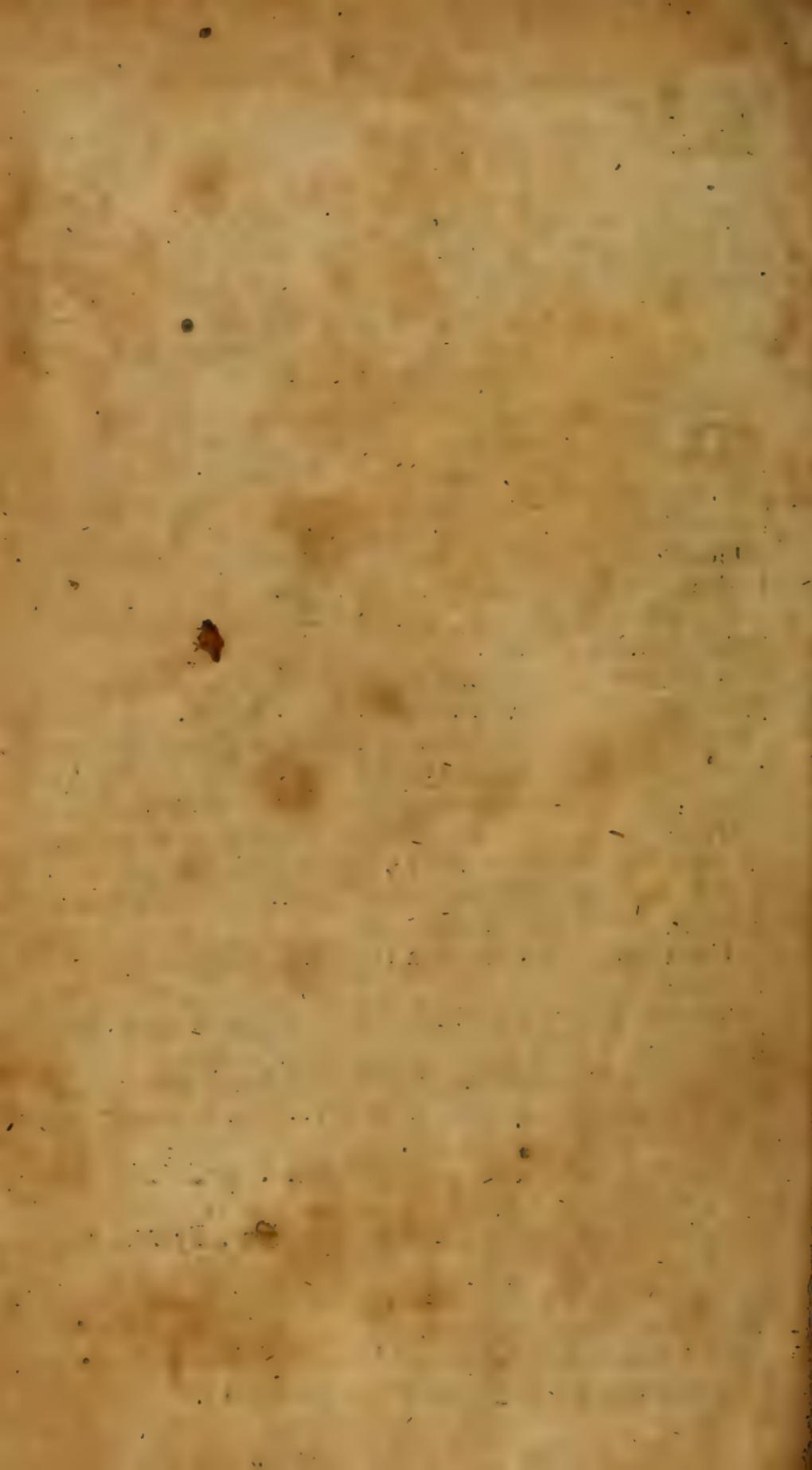
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